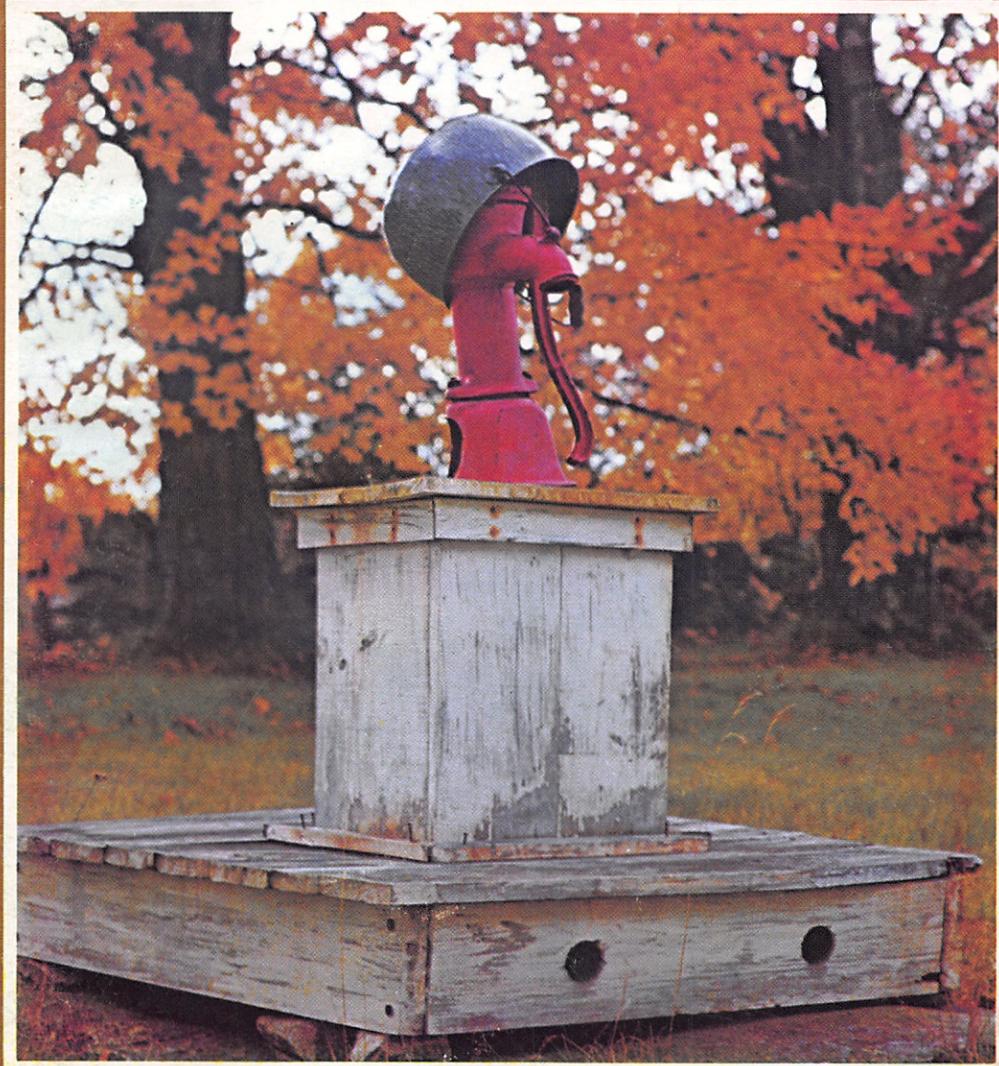


BitterSweet

75¢

November, 1978 *The Magazine of Maine's Hills & Lakes Region*

Vol. 2, No. 1



The Great Forest Fire of '47

Dennis Pike, Dealer in Hardwood Ashes

The Fabled Pig

Dear Peter 11-78

Maw has reminded me of the unappreciated Christmas gift I gave her last year. I can't for the life of me understand why. There ain't many wives who receive a chain saw. I was trying to be practical. Why this past summer, she let her feelings loose. There I was sound asleep in my hammock, when she cut down the two trees that was holding me and hammock. What a shock! My -how the blue flew, as she mumbled that daylight was for working.

Bert.

P.S. I need help!!!

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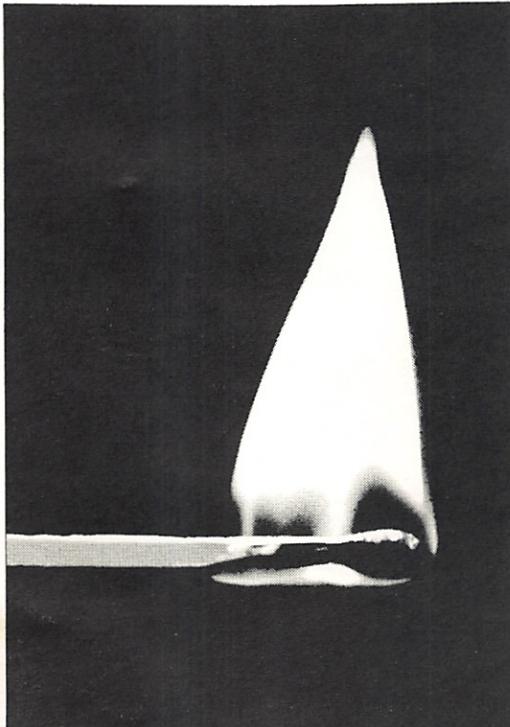
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Peter?

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robert l. milton

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ZENITH

The harvest air is crisper
with invigorating chill.
I hear November whisper
in dry leaves along the hill,
The stubble-fields are frosted;
silver sheathes late-blooming plants,
and Autumn is exhausted
by its own exuberance.
Be quiet now...remember,
as the hours come and go,
that often in December
flowers bud beneath the snow.

*Otta Louise Chase
Sweden*

Cross

CREDITS

Illustrations: Pages 2, 46, Brenda Haynes;
Page 28, Paula McKenney Hutchinson; Page
39, Nancy Marcotte; Page 44, Alison Kenway.
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BitterSweet

Box 301, Oxford, ME 04270
207 / 743-8225

Bruce H. Day & David E. Gilpatrick
Founders

Michael & Sandy Wilhelm
Publisher & Editor

Nancy Marcotte
Copy & Production Editor

Pat White Gorrie
Associate Editor

Brenda Haynes
Advertising Manager

Lottie Record
Distribution Manager

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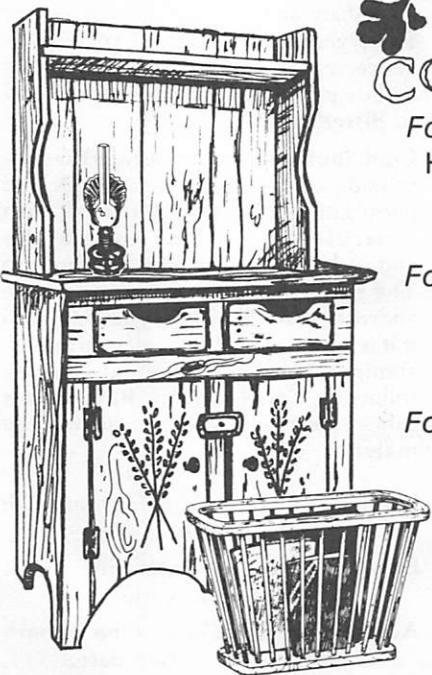
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A BITTERSWEET FIRST:
Some of the staff of **BitterSweet** and
Western Maine Graphics takes time out to observe
the magazine's first anniversary. Included are:
Bill Haynes, Brenda Haynes, Dave Gilpatrick,
Bruce Day, Dana Trask, Nancy Marcotte,
Peter Allen, Nancy Emerson, Michael Wilhelm,
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BitterSweet Views

With this November issue, **BitterSweet** heads into its second year. In taking stock of the 12 months of publication behind us, we are struck by the tremendous support shown the magazine from its outset by advertisers, readers, subscribers and contributors. People with ties to Maine's hills and lakes region have bought the magazine not so much out of curiosity, it appears, but because of a personal, possessive feeling of pride about it.

The letters which have drifted into our **BitterSweet** office in ever-growing piles these past months have been full of encouragement, advice, and literary efforts—short stories, poetry, brainteasers, artwork, and photographs. **BitterSweet**, it seems, has become valued as a record of the area's history and progress, its charm and character. Our readers reach for it to learn about their neighbors, the landmark down the road, recollections of days gone by. Old photographs fill them with nostalgia; stories of a new generation of artisans and craftsmen fill them with pride...and hope. Like the orange-berried vine for which it was named, **BitterSweet** has roots.

To all of you who have helped the magazine take hold during its first year, we say thank you. Your support, interest and contributions keep us growing.

The Staff of BitterSweet

Brownfield Is Burning!

The Great Forest Fire of '47

by Sally Clay

Before it ended, 20,000 acres of local forest land around Fryeburg, Brownfield and Hiram were left charred and hundreds of people homeless... prompting one old timer, a survivor of both the fire and the flood of 1898 to observe, "By God! Now we've been through both hell and high water."

On a bright October afternoon in 1947 a small column of smoke rose from the woods south of Fryeburg. Fire whistles blew in Fryeburg, Brownfield, and Hiram, but no one panicked.

It had been a dry season throughout the state—hardly any rain had fallen since spring—and already several other fires had sprung up only to be quickly extinguished. Even with limited equipment and with men untrained in forest fires, lower Oxford County's fire departments had handled small emergencies in the past, and no one doubted their ability to stave off danger now.

The blaze in the Fryeburg woods—near the site of the present airport—appeared to be just another small fire easy to control. Firefighters took up their stations on the banks of the Little Saco River and pumped water until twilight. For two more days they fought the smoldering but persistent fire until on Wednesday evening it seemed to be contained. The weary men returned home.

But the men had underestimated the strength of the "ground fire" which still burned in roots and humus beneath the soil. And no one could foresee the sudden wind that came up about 9 p.m. to fan the ground fire into new and violent flames. The nightmare began.

The cool Canadian winds swept into the Indian summer warmth with gale force and

took the firefighters by surprise. On Thursday morning, October 23, they watched helplessly while the fire, as if with a life of its own, gained speed and strength and moved southeastward with the wind toward Brownfield.

Desperately, they attempted to spray a curtain of water in the path of the fire, but the water turned to steam in the intense heat and the flames swept through undiminished. By noon the fire had traveled about a mile to Frost Mt., leaped over it, and roared on toward the community of 750 persons only another mile away. By this time the flames were soaring 1000 feet into the air, and the superheated air that preceded the blaze ignited homes in its path without a spark.

Brownfield was doomed. Local fire-fighting equipment was virtually useless, and when the Hiram fire chief collapsed from smoke and exhaustion, organization and leadership crumbled. Calls were put in for help from other towns, but with telephone lines down and with similar fires raging across the state, such help was a long time coming.

Meanwhile Brownfield burned. Residents had only enough time to pack their most precious belongings and escape with their lives. Some town documents and personal possessions were hastily stored in a new garage built with concrete blocks. Officials

reasoned that the concrete blocks were fireproof and the garage would be safe from the fire. Not so. When the superheated air swept into town ahead of the flames at 40 to 50 miles per hour, it heated the hollow centers of the blocks and the garage exploded, destroying everything inside.

The hot air was followed by the "crown fire" carrying flames and fireballs through the treetops, igniting the 100-year-old elms along the main street and the shingled roofs not already in flames. The surface fire followed, consuming the entire town in a matter of minutes. Gone were the Congregational Church, the Odd Fellows Hall, and all but a half-dozen or so houses in the town center.

Homeless Brownfield residents trudged on foot down Rt. 113 toward Hiram like wartime refugees, smoke-blackened and weeping, often driving cattle and other farm animals rescued from the burning fields.

But the wind continued blowing and the fire raged on. Until early afternoon it had followed a southerly course, devouring Brownfield but staying clear of the railroad tracks that run parallel to Rt. 113. But sometime in the afternoon the wind shifted

25 degrees, just enough to change the path of the fire to a more easterly one. The town of Hiram, four or five miles away, now stood directly in its path, and flames threatened to jump the railroad tracks and even the Saco River, endangering Denmark, to the east, as well.

Firefighting crews and equipment had finally arrived to save Brownfield, but it was too late for that; so the trucks lined up along Rt. 113 just north of Hiram, ready to fight the new battle. But who was to lead them?

"People seemed kind of paralyzed," says Raymond "Red" Cotton, engine operator at the time. He was stationed with his pumper beside the Saco River on Maple Street in Hiram. He and the other firefighters were ready for action, but in the confusion and the panic no one knew where to begin.

It was late afternoon, and in Hiram it seemed that even the sky was on fire. "Way up in the sky was just one red," says Freeman Howard of Hiram. "It looked like the world was burning." That morning Howard had been working on a bridge in Fryeburg. He was called to help fight the fire because, as a former forester, he was one of the few men thoroughly trained in forest fire techniques.



The forest burning in 1947

But with no authority he was unable to put his skills to use.

The fire had now reached a small field beside the railroad tracks near Mt. Cutler. On the other side of the tracks was the town of Hiram, doomed to suffer Brownfield's fate unless action was quickly taken. About 100 men stood in the field with picks, shovels, blankets, and other improvised tools, but they only stared blindly at the wall of flames approaching them from every direction, unable to act on their own.

Howard rushed to Red Cotton's pumper by the river and explained his predicament. He knew what to do, but the men in the field would not listen to him unless he were given authority by someone in charge—and there was no one in charge.

"Bluff it," was Cotton's quick advice. "Just go out there and tell them you're the chief."

Freeman Howard hurried to the field and began shouting orders. "Put that fire out!" he yelled. When the men pointed to the wall of flames and asked, "Where?" he simply indicated the nearest spot and said, "Right here!"

Soon the men were shaken from their paralysis and, under Howard's direction, the fire was held to the western side of the tracks, sparing Hiram from what had seemed almost certain destruction.

Shortly after this battle the fire did jump the tracks, and even the river, at a point known as Pickle Fields. Another crew combatted that blaze at the northern end of King St., and with their efforts plus a favorable wind shift, the fire was driven

back. Once the wind had shifted back to the northwest, the fire remained safely west of the railroad tracks.

Hiram was saved. Although the danger remained, the Hiram firefighters, and their ever-increasing reinforcements from other towns, prepared with new confidence for the long siege ahead.

On Friday, the day after Brownfield burned, Freeman Howard was officially appointed head of the Hiram firefighting crews. This contingent fought in the general area between the Brownfield town line and Hiram Hill. Other crews fought around the perimeters of the fire—on the back side in New Hampshire, on the north and east from Fryeburg and Denmark, and on the south by a large crew from Cornish.

Men and equipment arrived from Standish, Gorham, Lisbon Falls, and all over the state. The equipment was both professional and makeshift—Sebago sent an old logging truck with a portable boiler and a pump from an orchard lashed onto it. In the absence of a siren, a cow bell was tied to the cab.

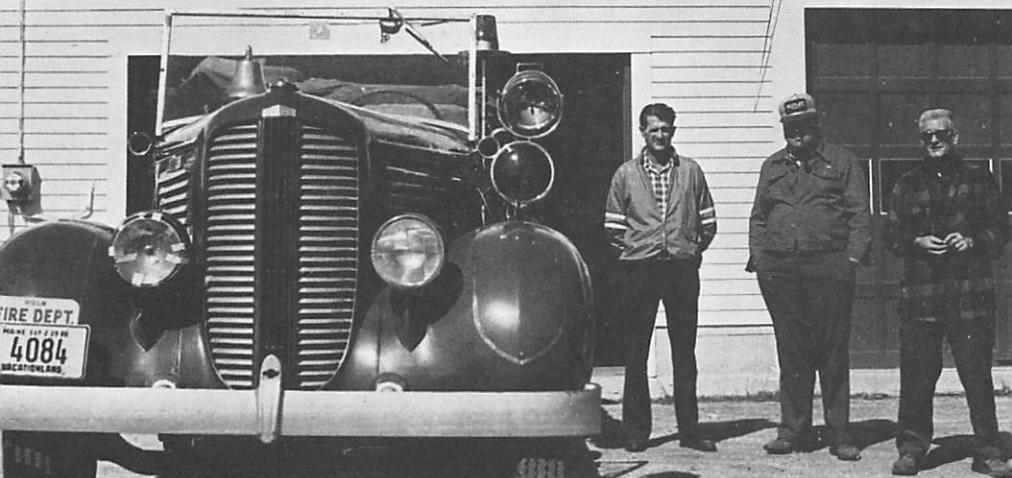
Red Cotton's truck was a 1937 Dodge pumper engine still in use today. He pumped water from the Saco River to fill the many tank trucks that lined Rt. 113, among them seven trucks donated by Merrill Transport.

Another improvisation was an Army surplus 10-wheeler that the town had used for snow plowing. On Friday the truck was rigged up with a 1000-gal. tank and a makeshift pump was strapped to the roof. "It looked like a Rube Goldberg affair," recalls



Four separate fires ravaged thousands of Maine acres that dry fall thirty-one years ago

HIRAM FIRE DEP'T.



Hiram Postmaster Walter Twitchell, Hiram Fire Chief Edward Pierce, and Russell Cotton beside one of the trucks used to help save Hiram. Cotton—who also battled the blaze—is the son of “Red” Cotton. “Red” operated a '37 Dodge pumper that is still owned by the department. Twitchell operated both a tank and a ten-wheeler during the holocaust

Hiram Postmaster Walter Twitchell. The 10-wheeler was operated by Ronald Breslin, along with Walter Twitchell and Russell Cotton, and it saw heavy service on Hiram Hill.

One of the greatest problems during the fire was the lack of communications. Vehicles were not equipped with radios, and telephone lines were down all along Rt. 113. Two forward-looking young men volunteered a Jeep with no reverse. The men acted as couriers, driving back and forth to firefighting scenes with essential messages. But since the Jeep had no reverse gear, often the crews would have to stop their work in order to lift the vehicle bodily and send it back in the direction from whence it came.

For five days all able-bodied men in Hiram worked day and night combatting the fire. All of the children had been evacuated on Thursday to stay with friends and relatives in surrounding towns, but most of the women remained to do their part in the emergency. The women, along with the Red Cross eventually, set up a relief kitchen in the Grange Hall where they provided hot food and assistance to the firefighters. The National Guard was called in to protect against looting and curiosity seekers.

By the weekend the townspeople were working with dogged determination to contain a fire which now covered an area twelve miles long and up to eight miles wide.

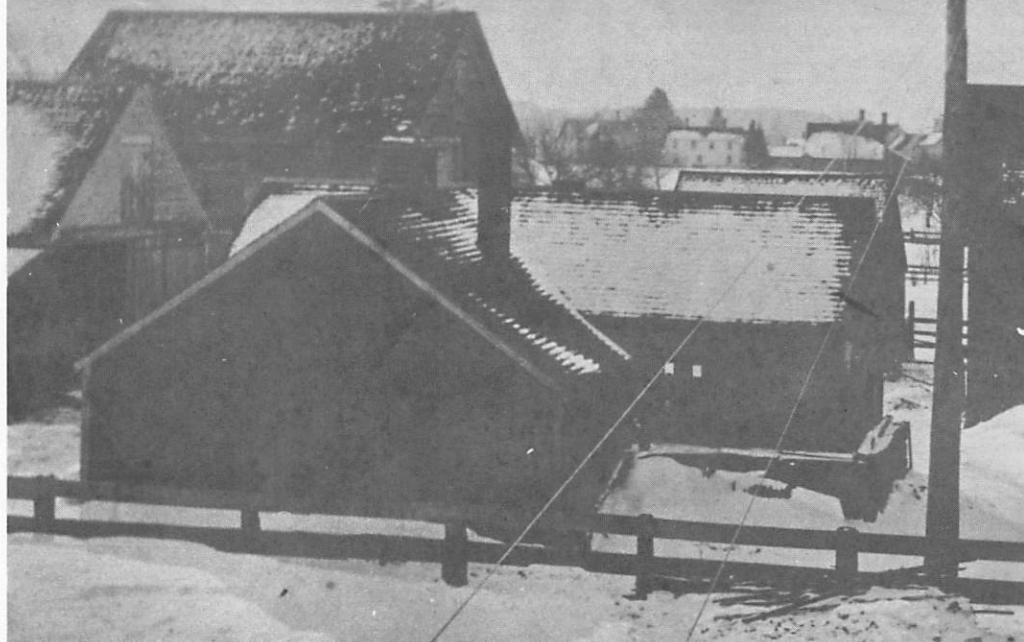
Hiram was no longer directly threatened, but if the fire pushed further southward, Porter and Baldwin would burn. Not only that, but another fire was burning just south of Limerick.

Should the fires join, they would cut a swath of destruction all the way to the ocean.

Under the command of Freeman Howard, a “backfire line” was set up just south of Hiram Hill and west of Baldwin. Using the principle of “fighting fire with fire,” the crews set controlled fires in the path of the big fire, leaving nothing for the fire itself to burn. It was this technique, even more than the gallons of water used, that held the fire in abeyance and finally stopped it on the outskirts of Porter, Kezar Falls and West Baldwin.

Over that weekend, it seemed that all of Maine was burning. Caused by the same dry weather and high winds, three separate fires burned in Brownfield, Newfield and Waterboro, and a fourth brought destruction to Bar Harbor. Some fires even reached all the way to Goose Rocks on the coast. Relations in Boston trembled at dire broadcasts reporting that Hiram was “gone,” and a Portland radio station announced that Hiram Falls was burning. (The latter would have been a remarkable sight, since Hiram Falls is composed entirely of water.)

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The Soapworks of Dennis Pike of Norway, Maine, as they looked in 1905. The building in the center of the picture is the soaphouse itself. Surrounding the soaphouse from left to right—the ashhouse, the barn, and the stable.

On any given winter day between the years 1880 and 1907 a farmer or housewife living in one of the many small communities surrounding Norway, Maine, might pause in the midst of the daily chores to take notice of a familiar wintertime sight—Dennis Pike making the yearly rounds with his soapwagon.

Dennis Pike was born in Norway in September of 1856. His father, Charles Pike, was a carpenter by trade and the family tree traced directly back to the first Norway Pike family, one of the principle settlers of the town. Dennis was educated in Norway schools and in 1874 he apprenticed himself out to a large wholesale firm in Boston, Massachusetts. After a few years, young Pike returned to Norway and, with the money he had saved, purchased a ten-acre tract of land at the southern end of town. This land was subsequently cultivated to strawberries, raspberries, and vegetables and under Dennis' constant care "Pike's Berry Farm" became well known for the excellent quality fruits and vegetables grown there.

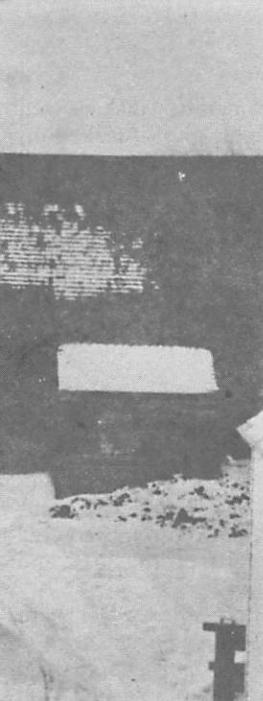
In Maine, however, gardening is strictly seasonal work, so Pike, ever ambitious and hard-working, sought alternate means of earning a livelihood to pass the long months

of winter. An old man, whose name is now forgotten, suggested that he try his hand at soap manufacturing. After a good deal of inquiry into the matter and correspondence with various soapmaking firms across New England, Pike decided to accept the challenge. In the late summer and early fall of 1879, with the aid of his fathers and brothers, he constructed the buildings that came to be known as the Pike Soapworks.

That fall, after the gardening season had passed and the first snows of winter had begun to fly, Dennis Pike began the hardwood ash-collecting rounds which marked the meager beginnings of a unique business adventure that was to last for the following 27 years.

In those days, wood—especially hardwood—was the primary source of fuel and huge fireplaces, parlor heaters and kitchen stoves consumed great quantities of it in it in the course of a year. Farmers were accustomed to saving the ashes for use as fertilizer, and also for the production of lye—a primary ingredient of the homemade soap that women of this era often made.

These hardwood ashes were the mainstay of the Pike enterprise. Indeed, the Jefferson Soap Company of Lowell, Massachusetts contracted to buy all the excess hardwood



Dennis Pike Soapworks— Dealer in Hardwood Ashes

by Ben Tucker III

ashes that Pike could collect. It was for this reason that Pike traveled so extensively about the countryside during the winter months.

The soapwagon itself was a homemade affair, about 20 feet long, 6 feet wide and 4 feet high. It was constructed so that the four large wooden wheels could be replaced in wintertime by two sets of traverse sled runners. Along the sideboards, painted in bright red letters, was a sign which read: *Dennis Pike Soapworks—Norway, Maine—Dealer in Hardwood Ashes*. The bars of hard soap were kept underneath the front seat of the wagon in a large wooden box with a hinged cover, and the soft soap was stored in a big barrel at the back end of the wagon. Just behind the front seat there were three wooden barrels where Pike put the soapgrease (fat, meat scraps, bones, etc.) which he collected on his trips.

This soapwagon was in actuality more of an ashwagon, because its main function was as a collection truck for the tons of ashes picked up in the towns. In fact, the hard and soft soaps were more likely to be used in exchange for the ashes, rather than in exchange for money. However, Pike did sell a good deal of soap in the Norway-South Paris area, and women were wont to stop at

his house with a container carried from home in order to buy a quart or two of the soft soap, a yellow gelatinous liquid not unlike today's waterless handcleaners. This soap was popular as an excellent cleaning agent for the handwashing of clothes.

Pike and one of his hired men—either Frank Cotton or Steve Ethridge—and, in later years, one of his own sons—Charles or Hugh—would make the ash-collection runs together. Most of the farmhouses they stopped at that first year became regular customers and after a few years, Pike knew which houses to frequent, in which towns, in order to get his yearly supply of ashes and soapgrease.

Measuring the ashes at each house was hard work and a special two-bushel steel measure was used. Dennis and his partner would shovel the measure full and, each grabbing a handle on the side, lug the ashes to the wagon and dump them over the rails. Often the ashes were damp, since they were frequently stored in the basement of a house or barn, and carrying that two-bushel measure rounded full was no small feat for the two men.

After the entire pile of ashes was measured and loaded and any available soapgrease was stored in the barrels, Pike

squared up with the party by giving out the appropriate amount of hard or soft soap. The hard soap was passed out by the bar and the soft soap was ladled out with a graduated quart dipper. If the day was windy and the ashes dry, Pike secured them on the load with a heavy brown canvas and then was ready to move on to the next stop.

These collecting runs to each tiny village across the countryside were made but once a year. Norway and South Paris homes were serviced more frequently. West Paris was a one-day trip, as were Buckfield, North Buckfield, Oxford and Mechanic Falls. The Otisfield-Harrison-Waterford excursion was a two-day junket that necessitated an overnight stay at a friendly farmhouse.

Hugh Pike, Dennis' second-son, now 87-years old, recalls a trip he made with his father in 1905:

"It was on a Saturday. We started away early in the morning and we were going to take in North Buckfield and Buckfield. We got over the side of Streaked Mountain and we took a road to the left to go to North Buckfield.

"I remember that when we struck that road to the left, it hadn't been plowed out too good. The wind come right up in our faces and it was cold, too. We finally got to North Buckfield but we had to be careful in places because it had already begun to drift. There had been a storm the night before of five or six inches and the wind made a lot of snow in the air.

"When we got to North Buckfield, we stopped at a farmhouse where Dad was familiar with the people and we ate our dinner. We had taken our dinner with us. I remember Dad tried to heat it up. It had frozen a lot; sandwiches and all that. He finally got it ready and he and I sat down and ate. We had some hot drink that these people had prepared for us. We left and spent the day collecting around North Buckfield at the farms where Dad was accustomed to go, and we collected all the way down to Buckfield village.

"We finally got ready to leave Buckfield village and come home and I remember we had three horses on—a pair and a leader. We started back and we had a load! It came off awful cold and there was a full moon. It was right overhead. Before we got out of Buckfield that moon was right out in glory.

"You know, coming up the back side of Streaked Mountain was an awful pull for

those horses. I can remember just as well how the runners ground and squeaked on the snow. It's an awful sound, now I'll tell you.

"We came up over the back side of the mountain and it was so steep and such a load that the horses couldn't go but a little ways. They were covered with white frost all over them from their breath; especially their heads and manes...And that old moon was shining on them.

"Dad said, 'Hugh, you get back by the sleigh runners and the minute I stop the team, you jump on that dog and you stay on it!' (A dog in this case refers to a lever along the runners that, when turned at right angles and driven down into the snow, acted as a trig for the weight of the load and thereby relieved the horses.)

"That relieved the horses and Dad let them rest about five minutes and then started along again. We were all of us, horses and men, glad to get to the top of Streaked with that load, now I'll tell you. Coming down over this side of the mountain, Dad had me get on that dog again at the steepest places and that helped trig the load to brake so much holding back. We were awful glad to get home that night and damn hungry, too."

The Soapworks were located at the southern end of town on Pike's Avenue, a small dead-end street named for Dennis' father. The operation was comprised of four buildings: the ashhouse, the big barn, the stable, and the soaphouse. The ashhouse was a small barn-like structure with doors at either end. When the soapwagon returned from one of the collection trips, Pike would drive it right into the ashhouse and he and one of his boys would stand in the wagon and shovel the ashes into two storage bins to either side. The big barn stood beside the ashhouse and here the soapwagon was kept when not in use. Across the way a little stable afforded room for the horses and storage for hay.

The soaphouse itself was the center and the most important building in the Soapworks. Here Pike made the lye he needed and also manufactured both kinds of soap, the hard and the soft. The lye was made by a simple process known as "leaching." Water was poured over a large amount of ashes that were in a container with small holes in the bottom (a leacher). The water filtered its way down through the ashes and the resultant liquid was known as

lye. Pike added caustic soda to this weak form of lye to increase its potency.

The dominating feature of the soaphouse was the huge steel kettle that occupied the center of the building. Measuring fully 10 feet across and six feet deep, this immense "soap kettle" was elevated from the floor by a wooden platform that fully encircled it and came flush with its top edge. In the space beneath the kettle, a roaring fire of pine slabs was kept to provide the necessary heat to keep the contents boiling.

Pike stood on the circular platform and filled the kettle partly full of water with a long hose which was kept nearby. The remainder of the kettle was filled with soapgrease (bones, fat, meat scraps) and the entire contents set boiling. As he stood watching the bubbling mixture of fat and water, Pike would remove the largest bones that didn't cook up—the marrow made good soapgrease—using a long, wooden-handled steel rack, and would add more fat as he saw fit in order to achieve the desired consistency. When the temperature was right and the liquid in the kettle was at the proper thickness, Pike poured in the lye-caustic soda compound. The resultant liquid hard soap was stirred and allowed to cool somewhat. A great deal of practice and a trained eye such as Pike possessed was necessary to produce a good batch of this hard soap.

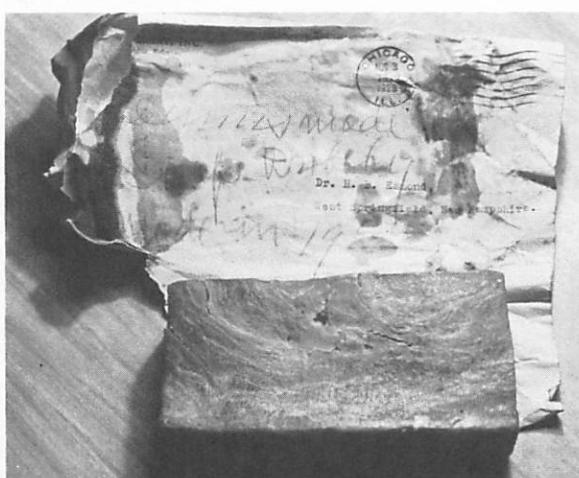
At the rear of the soaphouse were located two large cooling vats. These two unique tubs were made of four wooden sides lined with zinc and held together by large wooden bolts and steel bands that encircled the

outside. The bolts were adjustable making it possible to tighten the vats and get them water-tight. Each vat was approximately 5 feet long, 5 feet wide, and 2½ feet deep.

As the liquid hard soap was stirred, it thickened. Upon reaching a certain thickness, the hot soap was ladled from the soap kettle into the cooling vats by means of a wooden-handled two gallon dipper. A hired man stood on raised planks over these tubs and while the soap cooled down, it was his job to "crutch" it—slowly stirring the cooling mass to more thoroughly mix it. (The term *crutch* applies to the wooden stirring implement used for this job, which resembled an old inverted crutch.) The work was hot and, as the soap cooled, the crutching became more difficult.

The soap was allowed to remain in the cooling vats overnight. The next day, when the soap was firm enough to hold itself together, the sides of the cooling vats were unbolted and the steel bands removed. This freed the four wood sides which consequently fell away completely from the soap. Two giant cakes of hard soap now stood in the middle of the soaphouse floor. Pike and a hired man grasped a long length of heated steel wire and cut the huge cakes, first lengthways from the top to the bottom, then widthways from side to side. In this way the individual bars of soap were made. The bars were left for two weeks to harden up and then they were packed away in wooden boxes.

The soft soap was made in a similar fashion in a smaller kettle situated to the right of the large one. Resin, shipped in a



A bar of hard soap made by Dennis Pike:
Notice the handwriting on the envelope
that served as the soap wrapper
for a good many years; it says,
"Dennis made soap. Probably made
in 1900"
A 78-year-old bar of soap!

hogshead by rail from the south, was added to the bubbling kettle, the new soft soap was ladled into large wooden barrels and covered for storage.

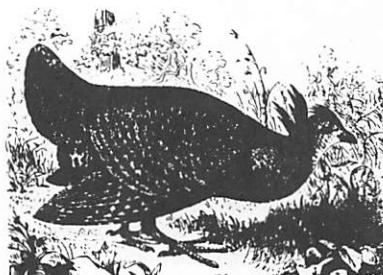
March and April were the soap-making months at the Pike Soapworks and the soap for the whole year was made then. When the soap season slowed down and Pike turned his attention to gardening, his sons Charles and Hugh would spend one whole Saturday at the train station in South Paris filling a boxcar with ashes left over from the year's collections. As the train pulled out of the depot on its way to Massachusetts and its final destination, the Jefferson Soap Company, the Pike soap business formally ended for another year.

In his *History of Norway, Maine 1786 - 1922*, Charles F. Whitman makes little mention of the soap business of Dennis Pike; stating merely that Pike "...engaged in the manufacture of soap some twenty-seven years." It is certainly a meager epitaph for the unique little business which was so much a part of people's lives in and around Oxford County at the turn of the century.

Hugh Pike still recalls the ledger that his father used to keep; a yearly record of sales

and expenditures. At the end of one year, the net sum of \$720 was realized. Hugh remembers vividly that at the bottom of the page where that figure was recorded, his father had underlined the sum a number of times and, beneath it, had written in his own hand, "A VERY GOOD YEAR!!" ■

Tucker lives with his wife and young son in Oxford, where he is employed at Robinson Manufacturing Company.



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A LONG WHILE AGO

The old man stopped at my gate with a simple request
For a bite to eat; didn't know as he could pay me much for it,
But he could work if I wanted at the woodpile or anything else
That needed doing about the place; he was handy
At most odd jobs, but now he was awfully hungry,
Hadn't tasted a single snack since yesterday morning,
A long while ago.

Once he was fed and ready to answer my questions,
I asked who he was and how he came to be traveling:
"Why, I used to live in this town when I was a boy,
Next house down but one, and I got lonesome to see it
Before I die, for I know I can't last too much longer;
So I come back for a look-see. Not much is changed
From the time I pitched hay down there in them lower meadows;
But that was a long, long while ago," he said,

"A long while ago."

"I remember the hay-rides we boys and girls took in the summer,
The sleigh-rides in winter, the corn-husking bee in the fall
When I got the red ear and could kiss the girl of my choice,
The skating-parties, the day I caught my first pickerel,
The day our barn burned with all the cattle inside
Too scared to come out. And Ed Morey shot through the windows
And killed every one so the poor critters needn't to suffer.
But that was a long, long while ago," he said,

"A long while ago."

"I recall Shorty Dionne, little runt of a man
Who used to work out in the lumber camps up north of Bangor,
Then come on down here and set up a mill to split shingles.
He could sing like a bird and make songs to beat Larry Gorman
And would jabber away in French when he got too excited;
But that was a long, long while ago," he said,

"A long while ago."

"I recall old Pap Burnham, what fought at Gettysburg,
Quick and fierce as a lucivee stalking a bobcat,
But he got all crippled-up and lived in a wheel chair
Till he finally died, and the Legion boys draped the flag over him
And the whole town come out to church the day of his funeral.
But that was a long, long while ago," he said,

"A long while ago."

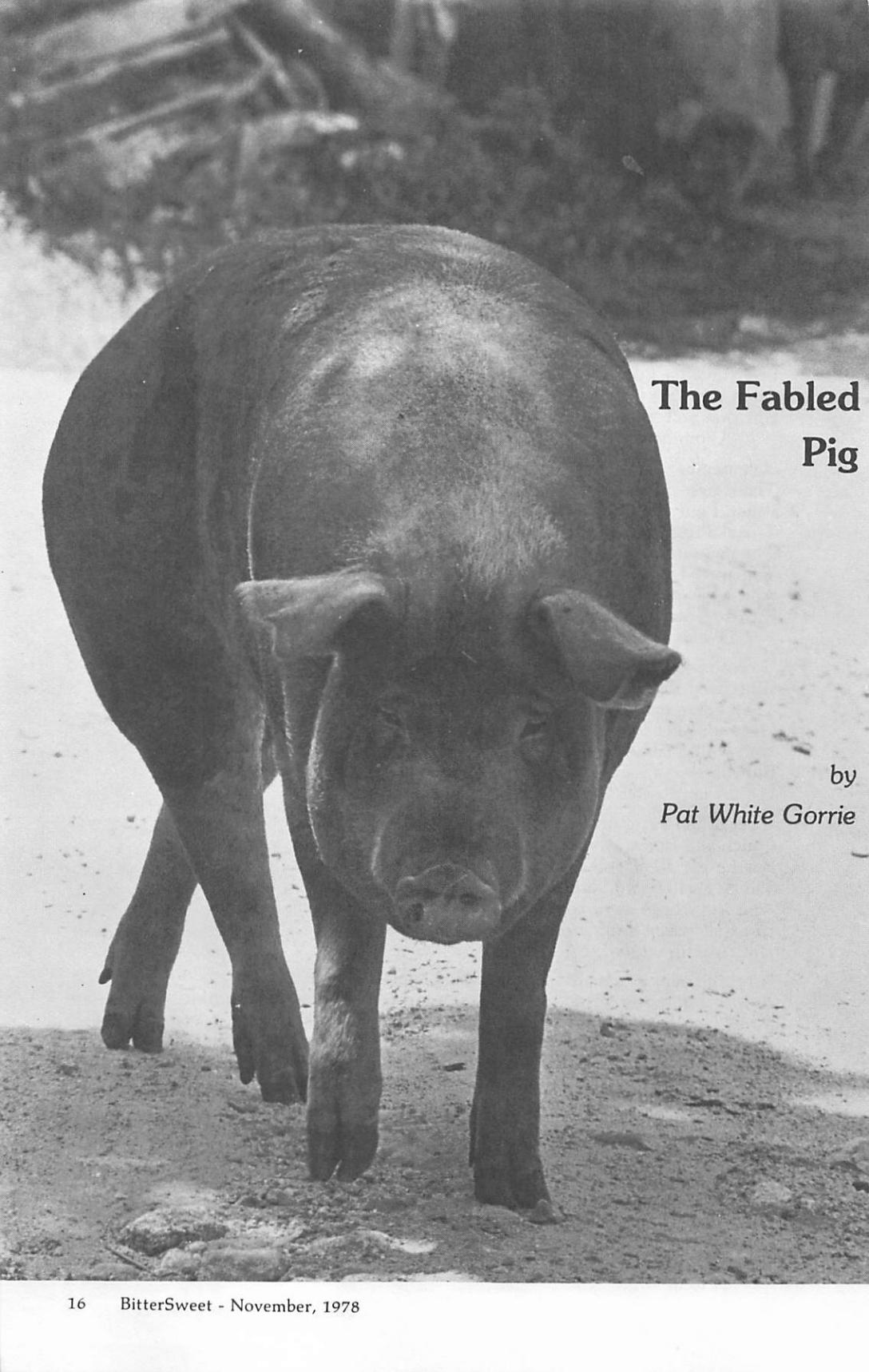
"I recall Forrest Edwards a-hauling his apples to Oxford
Across Thompson Pond on the ice, and once the snow caught him,
So he bedded down 'twixt the oxen and slept until morning,
Then popped up like a woodchuck and went on about his business.
He was soft-hearted and rendered *The Old Kitchen Kittle*
When Ethel J. Hirst had a "sing" for the local musicians;
But that was a long, long while ago," he said,

"A long while ago,"

"Somehow the world seemed better to me back in them days,
Slower and poorer, but pleasanter, less complicated.
Folks cussed out the government then, but they didn't mean it;
Now they do, and worry their selves sick about nothing.
Then they were happier, or maybe I was just younger,
For that was a long, long while ago," he said,

"A long while ago."

John E. Hankins
Otisfield



The Fabled Pig

by
Pat White Gorrie

What other creature has so captured man's imagination and attention through the ages?

*This little piggy went to market
This little piggy stayed home
This little piggy had roast beef
This little piggy had none
And this little piggy cried "Wee, wee, wee!"
all the way home.*

Is there a two-year-old anywhere in the English-speaking world who hasn't squirmed in anticipation while having his toes pulled by a favorite aunt and awaiting the "wee, wee, wee" of that final line?

For most of us, this is our first introduction to pigs.

Somewhere between the ages of three and five we are fed night-time doses of nursery rhymes in which a strange assortment of pigs (some with rings in their noses, some badly shaven, and others in need of a wig) parade in and out of jelly-smeared pages.

At age six we are propagandized with the story of *The Three Little Pigs*—conditioned to regard brick-laying pigs as mentally superior to straw- or stick-carrying ones and are introduced to the much-maligned wolf's first "bad press."

E. B. White comes later, when we can read (and think) for ourselves. *Stuart Little* and *Charlotte's Web* are discovered under the Christmas tree or on rainy-day jaunts to the local library.

Of course, those of us who are born in a place like rural Maine (which I wasn't), rather than in a city (which I was) probably had their own version of White's "Wilbur" to chase around the barnyard, very early on, and had no need for the misinformation spread about in children's books.

I suppose you could say I really "got into pigs" in third grade when Miss Peoples, our teacher, stood straight and tall in front of the class and regaled us with tales of Ireland, tossing in the fact that in that land of wee folk and shamrocks, pigs were the most precious of all household pets. They were kept clean and pink and allowed the run of the place. For breakfast they were fed lovely

big bowls of oatmeal. It was unlikely, in fact, that slop ever entered their menu. Molasses-laced grain and fresh-baked scones were more to their taste. (I have no idea whether or not this is true now, or ever was.)

I can still picture fondly my childhood pipe dream of living in a thatched-roof cottage in the midst of a kelly-green meadow speckled with bluebells and heather, and chasing a squealing piglet around the breakfast table in a rough-walled, white-washed kitchen, while a peat fire glowed in the fireplace. In my dream I bore a remarkable resemblance to Shirley Temple and my real-life Dutch-boy haircut was metamorphosed into springy golden curls. The piglet, of course, never grew up. It stayed daintily plump and small throughout the years of my imaginary childhood, forever batting its white eyelashes at me appealingly when at last I would catch it between the table legs and scoop it up for a hug and a tickle.

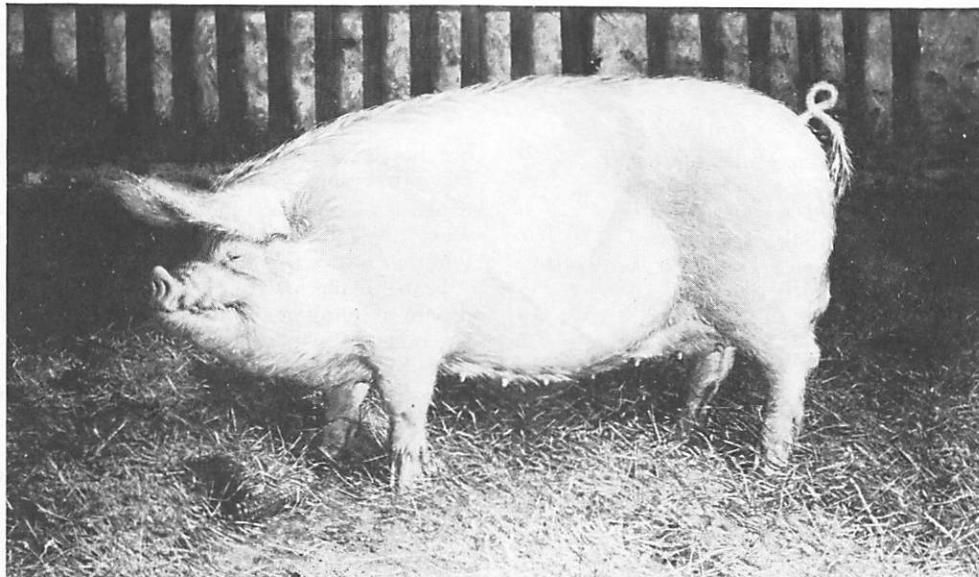
In contrast, my first face-to-face meeting with real, live, backwoods-Maryland-born-and-bred-in-a-pigsty pigs lingers in my memory as an enormous shock.

The smell of that pigpen rushed up to greet me even before I cautiously approached the fence that boarded it, and the sight of that huge, mud-covered sow snorting like some nasty wild beast from Borneo as she pummelled through her brood of little dirty babies in order to beat them to the garbage trough forever erased the notion that all motherhood is sacred and pristine. I'd never seen anything so unsavory in my life. For a long time, even bacon lost its appeal.

In the intervening years, pigs have trotted in and out of my consciousness with a comforting, often amusing regularity, parading their wondrous diversity and usefulness before me in many guises, from pig bristle art brushes to pottery piggy banks, pork fried rice to Jamie Wyeth's "Portrait of Den Den," pigskin gloves to silk-purse-out-of-a-sow's-ear philosophy.

Hardly a week goes by that I am not reminded of the creatures. In a startling

Pigs In Pictures, Prose, and Poetry



Den Den by James Wyeth (oil on canvas, 1970). Copyright ©1970 by James Wyeth
Photograph courtesy of the Brandywine River Museum, Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania

As I went to Bonner, I met a pig
Without a wig, upon my word of honor

from an Old Nursery Rhyme



"Miss Piggy" of
The Muppets television show,
a porcine Gloria Steinem,
has a certain class, even
when smashing some
male-chauvinist pig
with an umbrella



The pig baby by Mabel Attwell
from "Alice in Wonderland"



Barber, barber, shave a pig
How many hairs to make a wig?

Old Nursery Rhyme

One afternoon in June, when Wilbur was almost two months old, he wandered out into his small yard outside the barn. Fern had not arrived for her usual visit. Wilbur stood in the sun feeling lonely and bored.

"There's never anything to do around here," he thought. He walked slowly to his food trough and sniffed to see if anything had been overlooked at lunch. He found a small strip of potato skin and ate it. His back itched, so he leaned against the fence and rubbed against the boards. When he tired of this, he walked indoors, climbed to the top of the manure pile, and sat down. He didn't feel like digging, he was tired of standing still, tired of lying down.

"I'm less than two months old and I'm tired of living," he said. He walked out to the yard again.

"When I'm out here," he said, "there's no place to go but in. When I'm indoors, there's no place to go but in the yard."

"That's where you're wrong, my friend, my friend," said a voice.

Wilbur looked through the fence and saw the goose standing there.

"You don't have to stay in that dirty-little dirty-little dirty-little yard," said the goose, who talked rather fast. "One of the boards is loose. Push on it, push-push-push on it, and come on out!"

"What?" said Wilbur. "Say it slower!"
"At-at-at the risk of repeating myself," said the goose, "I suggest that you come on out. It's wonderful out here."

"Did you say a board was loose?"
"That I did, that I did," said the goose. Wilbur walked up to the fence and saw that the goose was right—one board was loose. He put his head down, shut his eyes, and pushed. The board gave way. In a minute, he had squeezed through the fence and was standing in the long grass outside his yard. The goose chuckled.

"How does it feel to be free?" she asked.

*from Charlotte's Web by E. B. White
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*from Mr. Pig and Sonny, Too by Lillian Hoban
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letter from my earthy sister-in-law, her pecker's tricky feat of training the family dog to scratch its belly (during which it grunts in ecstasy) is chronicled, along with the conclusion that "Pigs are the most sensuous of all animals."

Being of a curious turn of mind, I wondered how to go about finding if this was so. I visited John Harvey's pig farm in Edie Falls where I quickly became saturated in pigdom. The eardrum-splitting shrieking of those little curly-tailed pig babies resounded in my ears for days, but the sight of them lined up in a row nursing, or of Mrs. Harvey bottle-feeding the runt, "Chug-a-Lug," was charming. The story of "Sheldon," Yorkshire boar who now weighs 500 pounds, getting out of his pen at four months of age and strolling innocently down the road, his harem of six adoring sows hurrying along behind, brought a good laugh (especially at the description of the ensuing pig roundup, in and out of prickle bushes and mud puddles and barbed-wire fences).

But I came away from the farm feeling little sorry for the breeding sows who are kept in barred cages during their months of pregnancy and lactation, even though it was explained to me that in this way they can be kept clean and healthy and protected from the abuse of other pigs. It made sense, but still yearned to sneak back in the middle of the night and set them all free for a good romp in the fields and a heel-clicking stretch of their porcine legs.

As an exercise in reportorial objectivity, I next accompanied a pig named Priscilla to her own execution: observed her being shot between the eyes with a gunslinger's accuracy by Steve Bean of Otisfield's Cape resort; split down the middle with a surgeon's precision by my kids' laughing-eyed barber, Brad Moulton; and jumped in with my own two hands and helped pull out her innards while South Paris C.P.A. Ted Whittier held the plastic "doggy bag." Suddenly I was a medical student. Detached Scientific! Instead of fainting (or throwing up), I gleefully examined intestines and gizzards, marvelled at the heart and lungs, boisterously squirted the water hose full blast at Priscilla's disemboweled cavity and scrubbed, with thoroughness and finesse, her blood-spattered skin, hair, and dainty cloven hoofs.

Four days later, at The Cape's 50th Anniversary celebration on the shores of



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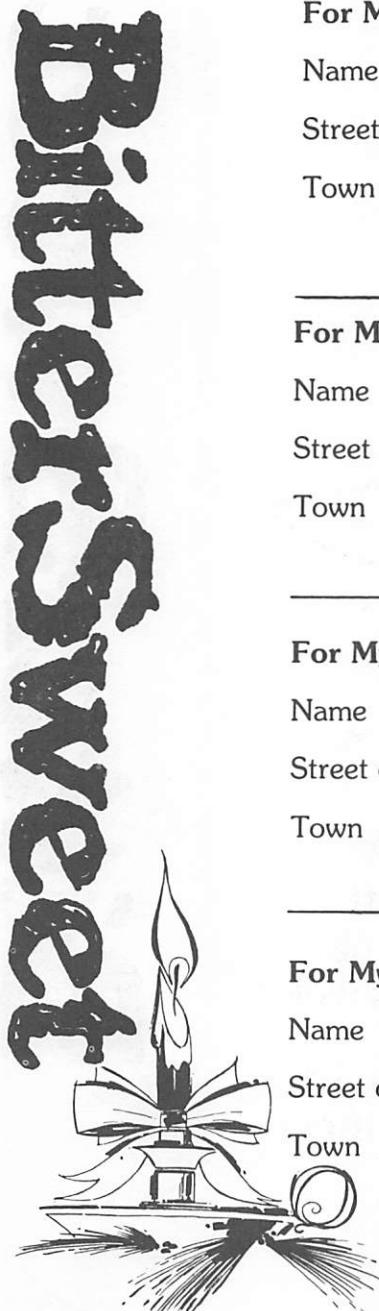
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Thompson Lake, Priscilla was roasted over an open fire to crisp perfection and served to a crowd of 150. Yes, I tasted her. She was delicious. I felt a warm affection with every bite, and thanked her silently with every lick of my chops... I mean, *lips*.

Now that I have become a country girl, I have toyed with the idea of raising a pig myself, for ecological reasons. Intermittently I dispose of leftover meals by trying to force them on my dog (who prefers the highest-priced dogfood) or by mixing them, like a salad, with fallen leaves and wood shavings (but my compost heap refuses to rot down and attracts every skunk in the neighborhood). Surely the most attractive aspect of pig farming is that the farmer always knows what to do with his garbage.

However, being one of a sentimental nature, I've held off buying a pig for fear of becoming overly attached, even though I know full well that pigs, like gingerbread boys, are made to be eaten. It is part of their irresistible appeal.

Also, I have been told that a female can eat $\frac{3}{4}$ of a ton of grain a year and a male a full ton. That adds up to the equivalent of an awful lot of leftovers.

Economics aside, though, any pig belonging to me would probably be given a name in short order and I'd find myself talking to it over my morning tea; perhaps even scouring it with a loofa sponge and herbal shampoo every Tuesday and Saturday. It might even become a child substitute.

Wouldn't it seem cannibalistic to eat such a well-loved member of the family?

The biggest deterrent of all, though, is my suspicion about myself: suppose I felt compelled to act out my childhood fantasy? Can you imagine my embarrassment if someone should catch me wearing a Shirley Temple wig, chasing a 200-pound porker in and out among the table legs and, in the process, knocking over a bowl marked "PIG," full of cooling oatmeal and Irish scones? ■

YOU DONT SAY

There was this farmer who had a very successful operation, but unfortunately he died. His only heir was his son, who didn't quite have it "upstairs." He had never had any interest in the farm so he sat around a few months and did absolutely nawthin'.

Finally he decided he would like to raise

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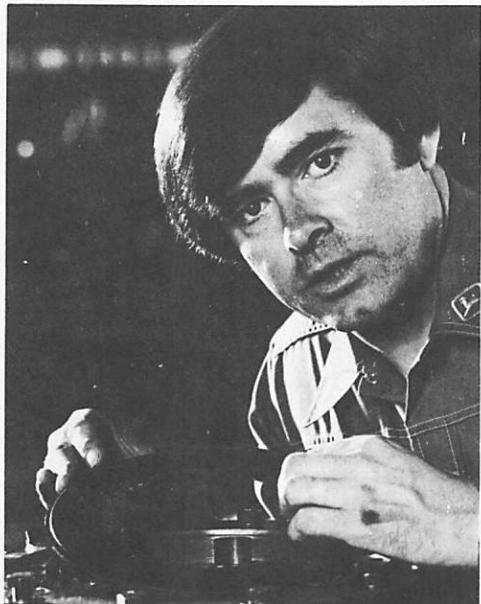
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pigs. He went to a neighbor and inquired how to go about it. The neighbor told him he was fortunate because his father had left him the best sow in the whole county. All he had to do was take that sow a little ways down the road and pay Eustice Little \$10 to let his hog service her.

The neighbor also allowed that if the reluctant farmer was serious about raising a good litter of pigs, he might be willing to go five miles further down the road and pay \$50 to Porter Fenderson for the use of the hog which had won him two blue ribbons at the county fair.

And just to be honest and to tell the whole story, ten miles away Harry Sawyer had a hog that was the best at the Skowhegan State Fair five years running, and Sawyer charged \$100 for the use of him. The trip might just be worth it, because the farmer would wind up with the finest crop of pigs in the whole county as a result of that mating.

The fellow thanked him and the next morning he set out bright and early, pushed his sow in the wheelbarrow down the road to Eustice Little's, sat around having pie and coffee all day, then picked up his sow and went home.

Next morning he went downstairs to check on the results. Nawthin'!

So he put his sow back into the wheelbarrow and pushed it five miles further down the road to Porter Fenderson's, paid him \$50, sat around all day having pie and coffee, put the sow back in the wheelbarrow and came home.

Next morning, he got the sow into the wheelbarrow, pushed her down the road ten miles to Harry Sawyer's place, forked over \$100, sat around all day having pie and coffee, and late that afternoon pushed the sow all the way back home.

Well, as you can imagine, this was a pretty tuckered-out young fellow. Next morning, he turned to his wife and said, "I'm too tired to even get out of bed. How about if you go down to the pig pen, check on the sow, and see if she had a litter of pigs yet."

Whereupon, the wife did so. When she came back upstairs a few minutes later, he asked her anxiously, "Well! Has she had any pigs?"

And the wife answered, "No, there aren't any piglets. But the sow's been waitin' for you in the wheelbarrow." ■

P. W. G.
With permission of Bruce McGorrill,
Portland



HAPPY THANKSGIVING FROM BITTERSWEET

November is an in-between month. The harvest is over but winter has not yet arrived. Now is the time when the country dweller tightens up against the snow—checking the buildings, raking the leaves, putting on storm windows and doors, cleaning up the garden.

Hoar-frost greets the early-morning riser. The sun's rays are slanted closer to the horizon and the days are shorter. The stratus clouds are long and thin, broken only by grey streamers of smoke from chimneys, and an occasional crow. The brooks and puddles are crocheted with icy lace, the brown meadow grass is carpeted with bright fallen leaves, and there's a nip in the air. The only apples left in the orchards are turning brown at the foot of the trees.

Families will soon be gathering in for Thanksgiving. Along with our wishes for a wonderful holiday, we at **BitterSweet** send along a very special recipe for the season, which came to us from Ethel Bean. Folks say it's a little unclear whether Ethel was swept off her feet by husband Steve or by his apple pie, because when they were dating, he often brought her home to the big old kitchen at "The Cape" in Otisfield and wooed her with piecrust and apples.

She has since taken over and surpassed him as Chief Pie Baker, and this is her recipe for *Brandy-Laced Apple Pie*:

Pastry (for 10-inch pie): 2-2/3 cups flour / 1 tsp. salt / 1 cup shortening / 7-8 Tbsp. water
Line pieplate with bottom crust.

Filling: 1 cup sugar / 1/3 cup flour / 1 tsp. cinnamon / dash of salt / generous 8 cups of apples (Gravensteins, Cortlands or Macs) / 3 Tbsp. butter or margarine / light sprinkling of fresh-ground nutmeg / sprinkling (1 Tbsp. plus) brandy.

Mix dry ingredients, then add apples. Mound in the center of the piecrust-lined plate. (This makes a beautifully-shaped, high pie.) Dot with butter or margarine. Sprinkle with nutmeg and brandy. Cover with top crust, slit* and shape crust. Bake at 425° for 10 minutes, then at 375° 'til apples are tender.

*You might try a design on the top crust—like a turkey? And remember, the old-timers say that the *correct* way to eat pie is just the opposite of what most of us do in polite society. According to them, you should always turn the pie wedge away from you and start with the outside crust first, then eat your way to the juicy tip!

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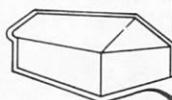
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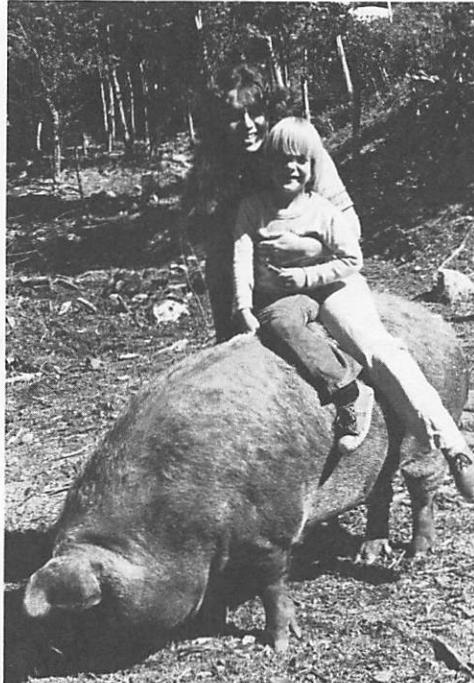
The Williams Family's

There are pigs and then there are Pigs. Flora is what you might call a pig's pig, in the sense that Sir Lawrence Olivier is an actor's actor and Jean Claude Killy is a skier's skier.

She has a certain class, born, perhaps, of the knowledge that her intelligence is superior to that of all the other barnyard animals at the Williams' farm on Paris Hill.

Her domain is 40 acres of forest and field. Here she romps and roots and oversees the activities of Pokey the Shetland pony, Buffy and Brownie, the Jersey milk cows and their calves, and half a dozen white Bantam chickens.

Occasionally she enjoys "sleeping over" in the hen house, which used to be hers. There aren't any objections from the chickens except when she tries to hatch their eggs. A three hundred twenty-five pound mama might be comforting to a litter of 22 piglets (which is what Flora dropped last time), but it's a bit much for a couple of unhatched chicks.



Flora with Jane and Timothy

Flora: A Pig's Pig

Modern queens occasionally work for a living at something amusing to keep from getting bored. Flora is no exception. She gets her satisfaction preparing the garden plot each year. Bob and Jane stake it out, put a fence around it, and Flora plunges in with vigor, digging up the stumps, removing rocks and piling them neatly in one corner, spreading chicken dressing evenly over the area, then "roto-tilling" the whole plot with her magnificent snout.

For this she is paid handsomely in Big Macs, french fries, cherry pies and Egg McMuffins from McDonald's garbage bins. An added bonus: back-and-belly scratches from Bob and Jane Williams and their children, Heidi and Timothy.

In fact, Flora's McDonald's binge last year put on so much weight that "Doc" Holden of South Paris put her on a diet. Yoga-like, Flora went on vegetarian-fruitarian fare and became quite spiritual in nature as well as slimmer in form. She would lie in meditative bliss for long hours, damming up the brook so the cows had to take the long way 'round to get their drinks of water, a lovely waterfall cascading over her hippo-like back.

Flora, apparently anxious to be milked alongside the cows, pantomimes the Jerseys whenever Bob's attention is directed there. Her floppy ears prick up at his first call and she quickly trots between Buffy and Brownie, trying to make herself inconspicuous, as they head toward the barn door. So far, she hasn't been quick enough to wiggle into the stall and get hooked up to the milking machine. Her sneaky ways have a certain roguish charm, but lack effectiveness. Perhaps her portliness is to blame.

Jane loves Flora so much that she calls her to the back door for a chat and a weight-watcher snack as soon as husband and kids are off in the morning, and before she, herself, leaves for her job as ward clerk at Andrews Nursing Home.

"I've had her three years and have been offered \$300 for her, but I can't sell that pig! I'm just crazy about her. If I didn't think she'd go through the floor, I'd have her in the house" ■

P. W. G.

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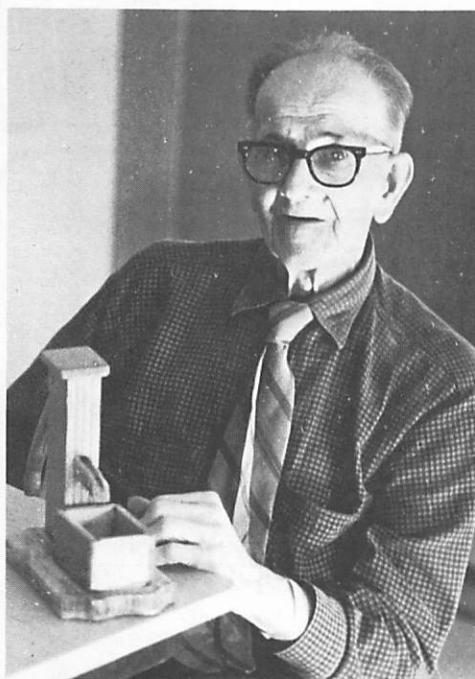
Folk Tales

Bert Cole, Craftsman

My first glimpse of Bert Cole, Craftsman (that's what the plaque on the door said) was a pair of crossed-at-the-knee, foot-swinging Lincoln-long legs and the tail end of a plaid shirt, sticking out from under the day's newspapers.

When we were introduced there at the Andrews Nursing Home where Bert has been living for the past five years I was startled by the snapping brown eyes that smiled a greeting.

Bert, tousled dark hair falling over his forehead, turned 95 last February and he's



Bert Cole and furniture

still a kid. He literally and merrily whittles his time away making doll houses and original miniature oak furniture to grace them (as well as all sorts of other items) out of a barnful of scrap wood from the old Paris Hill homestead.

He recognized my name. "You that woman who writes for *BitterSweet*. Great little magazine. Lots of history."

Bert used to make violins, something he started because he wanted to learn to play the instrument and couldn't afford the \$10 that a ready-made one cost. His wife was a professional musician and he was bound and determined to learn to play everything she could play: accordians, banjos, pianos, you name it. The Coles were married 75 years before Flossie passed away last March. The lingering twinkle in Bert's eye is an obvious clue to the happiness of the union.

Bert's trade was masonry and construction and he built many a smoke stack and house (three of the latter are on Paris Hill) and also the stone church in Poland Springs, back in 1912. In between, he was hunting or fishing or dancing or singing or playing the fiddle along with Flossie. But the job that lasted the longest (over half a century) was that of auto body repairman and painter for Perley Ripley.

Bert always had a way with wood, though, and probably would have made it the focus of a career, but there didn't seem to be enough work for carpenters back then.

So now he has a ball, making up for lost time, carving tiny high-backed chairs and tables, staining them in elegant dark shades and trimming the curved, satin-sanded edges with colonial shades of green or blue. He makes cradles that sit begging for bisque baby dolls to rock in them, bird houses that await the arrival of tanagers, and sewing chests that look like Alice-in-Wonderland hutch cabinets, right down to the tiny shuttered doors.

But Bert isn't living in a fantasy world. He's very much "today." It's all just for fun—an ingredient which "Bert Cole, Craftsman" has been able to savor for almost an entire century. ■

Dorothy Canwell, Whistling Mother

Whistling is something done by small boys, happy wanderers, Disney dwarfs and Dorothy Canwell. She whistles while she bakes (custard pies, usually). She whistles while she "puts up" pickles and tomatoes. She whistles while she's gardening, sweeping, or washing dishes.

But it is when she sits down to play the piano after the chores are done that Dorothy's whistling takes on a warble as sweet as a nightingale's.

"Since I was about four, I've been picking out songs. Can't read music but I guess I've always been able to play. Maybe I inherited the knack. My Dad was a wonderful musician. He could play trumpet and piano and compose, too. And he had the most beautiful Irish tenor voice I've ever heard."

Dorothy's father was Carroll Jackson and her mother's name was Evelyn. Welchville was her home and she hasn't moved very far from there. Oxford, where she lives with her husband, Harold, in a house he built himself, is only spittin' distance from her birthplace.

"The whistling started as a joke. I was playing the piano at a Grange meeting one night a few years ago when I overheard the men talking. One of them said that whistling was one of the many things women couldn't do, but men could. That sentence was no sooner out of his mouth than I started whistling right along with the song I was playing. It must have sounded good, because from that minute on, I've been asked to whistle every time I sit down to play."

Dorothy whistled herself right into a trip to California when she won the local and state Grange talent contest five years ago. She and her husband flew to Sacramento for the competition and a vacation that was the peak experience of her life.

"I lost, but that didn't matter. It was a dream trip; mostly because I never expected to get farther from Maine than Rhode Island. The money for my ticket was raised by my friends and neighbors through bake sales and things like that. Sure made me feel good to know they cared that much."

Dorothy works as a spinner in Robinson's Woolen Mill, collects old sheet music (which she can't read), bowls in a candlepin bowling league, cooks and bakes for her husband of 28 years and her son, Leonard.

The Grange, that ancient nationwide

establishment that started out as a place where farmers could swap information and grew to be a favorite gathering place for all rural family members, is an important part of the Canwells' lives. It was there that Dorothy began performing in front of an audience. Now she is frequently asked to give a musical performance before groups in the Oxford Hills area. Senior citizens love her.



Dorothy Canwell at the piano

Her old Kindler and Collins piano gets a tuning every six months and a dusting daily. "I earned the money to buy it myself when I was 15, from babysitting and housework. Nothing came easy in those days. But you appreciate what you work hard to get. Maybe that's why I still love it."

Dorothy's fingers rest a moment on the keys, then, nimbly, the melody of the theme from *Dr. Zhivago* flows from their touch; followed by George M. Cohan favorites like "Over There" and "Give My Regards To Broadway." She segues into "Blue Hawaii" and then switches moods with a blues number straight from Basin Street.

All the while, her lips whistle along with her rippling fingers. Dorothy Canwell doesn't consider herself the least bit special or talented. But she is apt to agree that the world would, in fact, be a happier place if more people could be like her and "give a little whistle." ■

... the ... **TUFF HOLE DINER**

During his childhood, Ira had somehow fallen into a sad mood and never quite gotten out again. He grew up to be an unhappy, disagreeable man completely dominated by the mysterious force which prevents people from acting wisely. If at a dinner party he was told the soup was too hot, he tested it anyway, burned his mouth, and was indignant at being served such hot soup. Recently, in spite of the warning of his friend Cosmo, he went to an obscure barbershop for a trim and received instead, to his horror, an old-fashioned haircut that exposed all the bumps and slopes of his skull. He threatened the barber with a lawsuit and refused to leave the shop until Cosmo found him a paper bag to use as a hat. "The barber worked so fast I didn't realize what was happening," he explained to Cosmo when they were again outdoors. "This so-called haircut is short enough to last me the rest of my life."

Ira wore the paper bag straight up on his head, making him look, Cosmo thought, like the king in a school play. Of all Cosmo's friends, Ira was the most difficult to love, but the one Cosmo loved best. He knew that Ira liked to seem worse than he really was. For instance, whenever Ira heard children singing he felt like crying, but he told people, "Whenever I hear children crying, I feel like singing."

As they walked toward the center of town, Ira stopped at a rummage sale to look for something that would cheer him up. On an impulse, he bought a rubber mouse he thought Cosmo's two-year-old daughter might enjoy. But after he'd paid for it, it seemed to him that she wouldn't like it. It was an old, soft, dirty thing from which the

paint was peeling. When squeezed it made an ugly noise. Ira stuck it into his pocket and felt foolish for having bought it. He slapped at flies circling his hat and one crash-landed on the sidewalk. He recalled guiltily that Cosmo's wife did not approve of hurting living things, even insects and dogs. Ira was secretly in love with Cosmo's wife and whenever he thought of her, he experienced fever, dizziness, nausea, and other symptoms of unrequited love.

"Bread is a relief for all grief," said Cosmo, and led Ira to the Tuff Hole Diner, a restaurant on a busy narrow highway on the edge of town. The place stood on a gravel lot and was surrounded by pickup trucks. The customers were mostly working men; they sat at the counter eating doughnuts and pie, drinking coffee and soda, listening to music, smoking, swearing, talking about work, women, money, trucks, guns, and fishing. As Cosmo and Ira entered, a female patron in one of the booths told her restless son harshly, "Don't touch your bottom, you'll make it sore," and a busy waitress said sharply to the same child, "Don't touch anything, don't say anything, don't do anything." An old man sitting near the bored boy tried to entertain him by poking him with the tip of his cane. He said to the boy, "I'm old but I'm awfully tough. When I was your age, the doctors said I wouldn't live another month. But now I'm eighty-seven years old and everybody's dead but me. What do you think of that?"

Cosmo ordered tea and ate a piece of cold toast his daughter had hidden in his shirt pocket at breakfast. Ira ate two pieces of pie but resisted the temptation to order a third. Ira had such an addictive nature that if he did

Fiction by James Swan

something three times in a row, a life-long craving was established. He was already addicted to gum, sports, newspapers, movies, coffee, old jokes and a hundred other things. He especially enjoyed jokes. The only reason he still visited his parents, whom he disliked, was that every night after supper his father told jokes and did coin tricks.

As the waitress cleared the table, Ira complained to her that the diner was full of ants. She said, "They're not bothering me. They mind their own business and instead of making a mess, they try to clean one up." Her attitude reminded Ira that people did not like him. The memory of yelling at the old barber made him uncomfortable and he asked himself if he should do something to improve his disposition. Whenever he checked back in his memory to the last time he behaved badly, it was never longer than an hour ago. Shortly before the incident in the barber shop, he had offended a friendly young woman by insisting too strongly that cancer was caused by the glue on the backs of postage stamps. Ira guessed that his past was filled with opportunities for happiness that had been lost because he was so rude, nervous and self-centered. He quizzed Cosmo for the secret of happiness. Cosmo, who believed that reality was only a hallucination and so was relaxed and cheerful at all times, said lightly, "Don't do anything, don't touch anything, don't say anything." Ira followed this advice for ten minutes, but didn't feel any happier. He wondered if he'd been born to suffer; once while bending down to tie his shoe, he had broken his left leg in two places.

A woman left the diner, but had to return a moment later for a forgotten package. She

was embarrassed and made deprecating remarks about her mental alertness. She imagined everyone was looking at her—in fact, no one had noticed her before or paid attention to her now. Everyone but Ira was staring out the windows at the heavy afternoon traffic. Ira was studying the other men in the diner. It seemed to him that they were all bigger than he, better looking, more confident. His mood became darker and darker, his spirits sank deeper and deeper, the will to live grew weaker and weaker until he felt numb and empty. He began thinking to himself, not for the first time in his life, "No one loves me, I'll never be happy, no one loves me, I'll never be happy..."

Cosmo noticed that Ira was succumbing to a dreadful paralyzing depression. He shook him until the paper bag on top of Ira's head slid down over his bleak, staring eyes, but he got no response. Cosmo's efforts to revive his friend attracted attention because the rubber mouse in Ira's pocket cried berserkly as Cosmo rocked him back and forth. The other men in the diner watched with interest but without sympathy. The waitress set a glass of water in front of Ira and patted his rigid shoulder encouragingly. The old man fanned him with a menu. The little boy in the next booth begged his mother to tell him what was wrong with Ira, why there was a bag on his head, and why he made a noise when he was touched. The mother, exasperated by his restlessness and curiosity, slapped the boy and roughly made him sit down beside her. Then she hugged him and ordered him ice cream, but it was too late. He cried inconsolably. No one loved him. He would never be happy. ■

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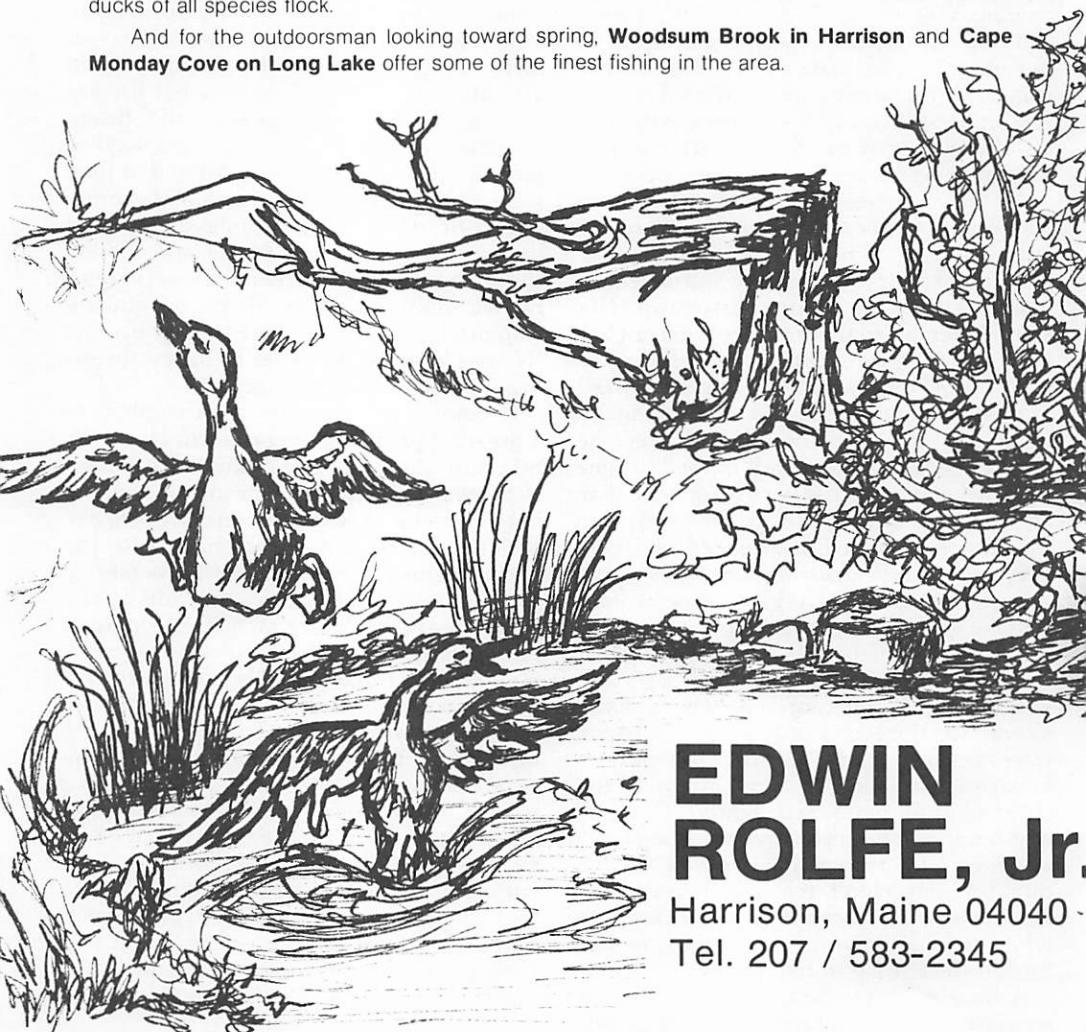
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If duck hunting interests you, seclusion is the password on **Waterford's Bogg Pond**, where ducks of all species flock.

And for the outdoorsman looking toward spring, **Woodsum Brook in Harrison** and **Cape Monday Cove on Long Lake** offer some of the finest fishing in the area.

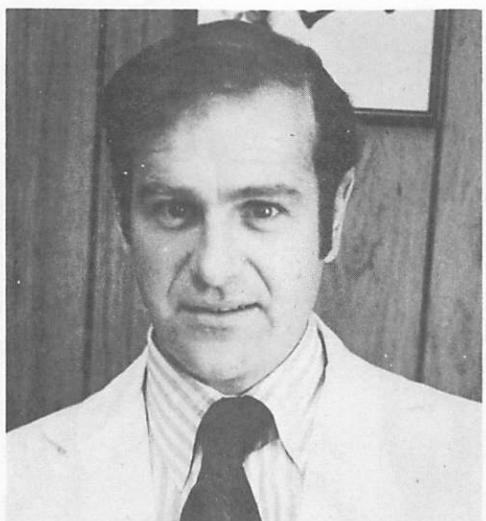


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Medicine For The Hills

by Michael A. Lacombe, M.D.



Understanding Arthritis - Part III

In two previous articles we have examined rheumatoid arthritis, arthritis quackery, and various drugs used to treat rheumatoid arthritis. We shall now turn to a discussion of the other common forms of arthritis.

Osteoarthritis or *degenerative joint disease* is the arthritis of advancing age. We all develop this form of arthritis if we live long enough. It is the most common form of arthritis—37% of adults and 97% of those over age sixty have it. It is the arthritis of wear-and-tear, involving the joints most burdened in life. The hips, knees, spine, and outermost joints of the fingers commonly suffer. This disease spares the wrists, elbows, shoulders, ankles and base of the fingers, and therefore is distinct from rheumatoid arthritis which commonly afflicts these joints.

Osteoarthritis differs from rheumatoid disease in another way as well. There is seldom swelling, redness, or increased heat (i.e. inflammation) in the affected joint, and there are never those constitutional symptoms of weight loss, fatigue, or

involvement of the internal organs discussed in the September article.

In osteoarthritis the gristle of the joint space—cartilage tissue and synovium—becomes worn away. The joint loses its elastic cushion and lubrication. The cartilage frays, and bone begins to grate upon bone. Pain ensues. If the process becomes severe, the joint becomes misshapen and markedly limited in its motion. One sign of osteoarthritis is the bony enlargement of the end joints of the fingers, quite commonly seen. Some people are more prone to this joint wear-and-tear and may develop the disease as early as age forty. It is also more common in women. Trauma to a particular joint may speed development of osteoarthritis in that joint.

Physical therapy and exercise help tremendously in preventing immobility of joints and in preserving function. Treating obesity is obviously crucial in the treatment of osteoarthritis. Aspirin, indomethacin, tolectin (an indomethacin substitute), and phenylbutazone (discussed in last month's article) are all quite effective for pain relief. With severe joint disability, surgery may help immeasurably; patients receiving total hip replacement are wonderfully benefited.

• • •

Gout is a second common form of arthritis.

"The victim goes to bed and sleeps in good health. About two o'clock in the morning he is awakened by a severe pain in the great toe, more rarely in the heel, ankle, or instep. This pain is like that of a dislocation, and yet the parts feel as if cold water were poured over them. Then follow chills and shivers, and a little fever. The pain, which was at first moderate, becomes more intense. With its intensity, the chills and shivers increase. Now it is a violent stretching and tearing of the ligaments; now it is a gnawing pain; and now a pressure and tightening. So exquisite and lively, meanwhile, is the feeling of the part affected, that it cannot bear the weight of the bedclothes, nor the jar of a person walking in the room. The night is passed in torture, sleeplessness, turning of the part affected, and perpetual change of posture."

Thus did a seventeenth-century physician describe one of his own gout attacks. There is no improving upon this description. Of all patients in pain, the young doctor in training never forgets the patient with a kidney stone nor the man with severe gout.



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Gout is an arthritis caused by chemical imbalance. Uric acid concentrations in the blood rise above normal because of an inherited defect of over-production of uric acid or underexcretion of it. Uric acid crystals in excess settle out in tissue, joints and kidneys, much as excess salt settles in brine. These joint crystals incite an attack by the white blood cells, and, as with rheumatoid arthritis, inflammation of the joint results. Inflammation in the joint can mean arthritis. Were that not enough, crystals in the kidneys damage those organs and can lead to kidney stones.

Misconceptions abound concerning gout. A high uric acid level doesn't necessarily diagnose gout. Twice as many people have abnormally high blood levels of uric acid as ever develop gout. A sore toe or knee coupled with a high blood test for uric acid does not necessarily mean that one has gout. Diagnosing gout may be more involved than that—a needle in the joint, a urine collection, or x-rays of the joints affected are often all required. Still, many with osteoarthritis of the big toe are mistakenly labelled as having gout because of one blood test.

Treatment of gout is quite different from

that for osteoarthritis. Distinguishing between the two is therefore quite important.

A second misconception about gout concerns diet. Although dietary control is important in treatment, a single dietary indiscretion will not cause an attack. In fact, fasting is more likely to do so. The misconception that wealthy people with splendid diets are more prone to gout is just not true. Membership in the middle class, with its less spectacular culinary delights, does not protect one against gout.

Gout cannot be cured. The drugs available control the disease so well, though, that kidney damage is avoided, and acute arthritis rarely, if ever, occurs. Gout medicine must be taken for life. Patients too often take the medicines for a few months, then stop them, believing themselves cured. Colchicine, indomethacin, and phenylbutazone all treat gout quite effectively. Allopurinol (Zyloprim) and probenecid (Benemid) lower the blood levels of uric acid and prevent future attack as well as preventing kidney damage. Allopurinol and probenecid are of no use in other forms of arthritis. Aspirin prevents the body from ridding itself of uric acid and can therefore worsen gout in a

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'gout-prone individual. Correct diagnosis of arthritis is therefore very important.

Rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis, gout—these are the most common forms of arthritis. *Ankylosing spondylitis* is much less common and chiefly affects the spine, although other joints may become inflamed. Not usually as crippling as rheumatoid arthritis, ankylosing spondylitis runs in families and affects primarily young males.

Systematic lupus erythematosus usually strikes young women. The arthritis of this disease is similar to rheumatoid arthritis, but fever, rash, and kidney disease are also frequent. Though many cases of lupus are mild, this can be a chronic and potentially life-threatening disease. Treatment can be difficult and quite hazardous.

Scleroderma produces a rheumatoid-like arthritis, and also hardening of the skin, various organ abnormalities, and whitening of the fingers upon exposure to cold (so-called Raynaud's phenomenon). Many people however have Raynaud's phenomenon without ever having scleroderma. Many cases of scleroderma are mild, but the disease can be devastating.

Infectious arthritis is not rare. If recognized and not confused with another form of joint inflammation, it is curable. Most commonly, joint infection results either from extension of infection from a wound near the joint, or from blood-borne spread of a gonorrheal infection. Usually one joint is infected only. The inflammation (swelling, redness, heat, pain) can be profound.

Elderly patients with "rheumatism" may have a potentially devastating disease. *Polymyalgia rheumatica* affects chiefly the muscles of the shoulders and hips, producing morning stiffness, lethargy and weight loss. Since this is a muscle rather than a joint disease, polymyalgia rheumatica is not really an arthritis. But because of its chief complications this form of "rheumatism" is worth mentioning. In 40% of those with this muscle disease, the arteries supplying the retinas become inflamed and sudden, rapidly advancing blindness is the result.

Pain, headache and tenderness in the temples may provide a warning of this complication to those elderly people with severe pain in the shoulders and hip muscles. A simple blood test makes the diagnosis. The disease responds dramatically to low dosages of cortisone and blindness can be prevented.

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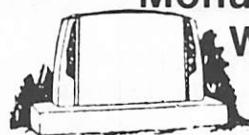
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To summarize these last three months' articles on arthritis, consider a number of points:

- Diagnosing the various types of arthritis can be difficult. A painful toe may indicate gout, gonorrhea, osteoarthritis or rheumatoid arthritis. The patient cannot be expected to make the distinction among these various diseases but ought to be aware of the many diseases which must be considered.

- Medicines are quite helpful in treating arthritis but must not be used in shotgun fashion; there is no one drug which will treat all forms of arthritis. Aspirin helps rheumatoid arthritis but can aggravate gout. The patient should be aware of the possible dangers of drug therapy. In some instances, the side effects of medication can be worse than the disease.

- Most arthritis is chronic and without cure, though effective therapy is available. Obesity adds to the burden of diseased weight-bearing joints and extreme obesity can cause osteoarthritis of weight-bearing joints.

- An informed patient can provide information helpful in making an arthritic's diagnosis and can better assess his treatment by judging how his doctor listens to him and what factors the physician considers when confronted with a case of arthritis. The informed patient is an aware consumer, better able to direct and control his medical care. ■

Dr. Lacombe is a member of Norway's Oxford Hills Internal Medicine Group and serves on the Stephens Memorial Hospital Health Education Project Advisory Board.

YOU DON'T SAY
Abijah Buck Slips Into Town

Benjamin Spaulding and not Abijah Buck, for whom the town is named, was the first settler in Buckfield. He came to Maine from Chelmsford, Mass. His migration to Buckfield grew out of friendship. He had been a bondsman for a friend and was forced to pay. It left him heavily in debt and he came down to the district of Maine to regain his fortunes by trapping fur-bearing animals.

This was in 1776. Spaulding erected a log cabin on what has later been known as Record's Intervale, located between the Whale's Back and the east branch of the



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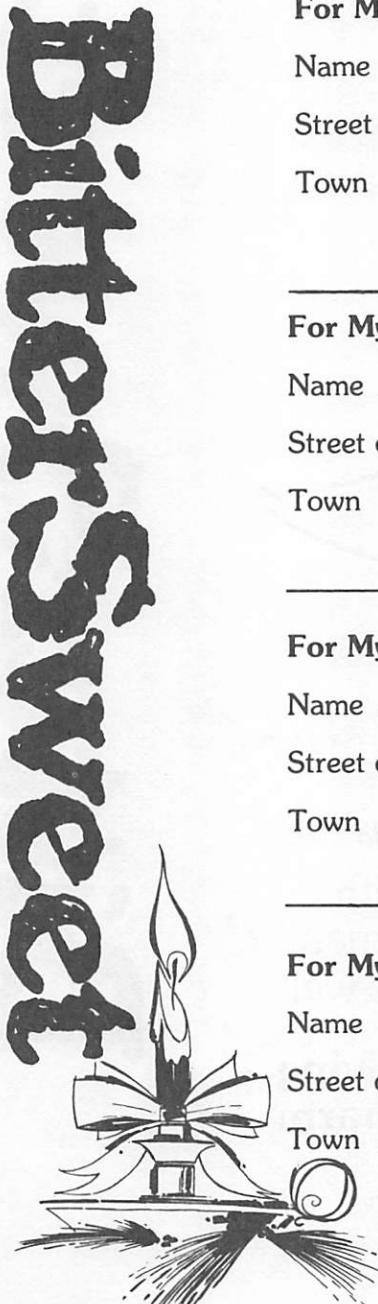
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Nezinscot River. From there he ran his trap line and also engaged in trade with the Indians. He was a stern but square-dealing man. This earned him the respect and perhaps even the fear of the Indians.

In all events there is nothing in the stories which have come down thru the years to indicate that Spaulding did not live harmoniously with the Redmen. Many stories are told by older persons, who heard them from their grandparents and great-grandparents, of his relations with his neighbors. None better illustrate the respect which he had inspired in them more than the following:

Making the rounds of his trap-line one day, Spaulding found that one of his traps was missing. He did not know exactly who had taken it, although he figured that some of the Indians had done so.

To the first Indian he met he said, "If that trap stolen from me isn't returned I will shoot the Indian that took it."

To the next Indian he came upon he said the same thing and so on, throughout the day, he told various braves what he proposed to do if the missing trap was not forthcoming.

That night, an Indian came to the log cabin on the Intervale with a trap, saying, "Here you' trap, Palding."

After remaining at the Intervale for two years, during which time he was very successful both in trapping and trading with the Indians, Spaulding returned in 1779 to Chelmsford, where he paid all his debts. However, he had learned to like Maine, the wilderness, and the Intervale. So, in the spring of 1780, he assembled his belongings and, with his family, came back to the area to settle and pass the remainder of his years.

But another had preceded him. Abijah Buck had brought his family from Massachusetts while Spaulding was away, slipped into town, erected a home and cleared land, thereby becoming the first permanent settler of "Buckfield."

The first identification given the town was "Number 5," following the surveying of the town in 1775 which allowed settlers to purchase their land from the state of Massachusetts for two shillings an acre. After a time, the town became much better known as Bucktown and when incorporation took place in 1793, the present name of Buckfield was selected. ■

Submitted by Virginia Smith of Buckfield, from an article in an old scrapbook, author unknown.



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Serving Up The Family Pig

Lucretia Douglas of West Baldwin offers the following suggestions for moving the family pig from barn to table.

After the animal has been slaughtered and butchered, it is time to cure the meat. One of the most important steps in the home-curing process is temperature. If possible, the animal carcass should hang twenty-four hours at a temperature of between 36° and 40° to be sure the meat is thoroughly cooled.

Pork is first cured either by placing it in a brine or by curing prior to smoking for ham, bacon, or smoked pork chops.

For brine curing you will need a large earthen crock that has been washed with baking soda and then scalded several times to sterilize. Weigh the meat you plan to cure so you will know how much curing mix to make. You may multiply or divide the recipe.

Mix together 12 pounds of salt, three pounds of sugar and two oz. of salt peter for each 100 pounds of meat to be cured.

Rub this mixture over each piece of meat, working it over the whole surface of each piece as well as possible.

Place the largest pieces of meat on the bottom of the crock, skin-side down. Put top pieces skin-side up. Cover with a large china plate, or glass or enamel kettle cover that will hold the meat down so it won't rise when brine is poured over it. Do not use metal. Weigh this down with a large rock that has been scrubbed with a stiff brush and soaked in boiling water to make sure it is sterile.

Next boil six gallons of water for each 100 pounds of meat to be cured and dissolve in it the remainder of the dry mix prepared and used in rubbing the meat. Cool until brine is cold, then pour over meat in crock. Be sure

none of the meat sticks up out of the brine.

The pork must remain in the brine for three to four days for each pound of meat. Remove the smallest pieces for smoking first, and hang up to drain and dry while repacking the larger pieces in brine. Should the brine become sour or ropy (slimy, gelatinous), it should be boiled and cooled again, or fresh brine made. If the brine seems satisfactory you may use it again on the large pieces.

Wash each piece of meat in clear cold water and hang up to drain for a day before smoking. Hooks or heavy twine may be used for hanging.

If you prefer the dry-cure method, mix together eight pounds of salt, three pounds of light brown (or white) sugar, and three oz. salt peter for each 100 pounds of meat. Blend mix carefully and then rub over entire surface of each piece of meat to be cured. Use about half the mix for the first rubbing. Place on table to drain. On third day, rub in the remainder of the mix. Use care rubbing meat not to break outside membranes or ham may become hard and dry. Pack meat in sterile crock. Repack meat in ten days, placing bottom pieces on top.

Leave meat two days for each pound, but never less than 25 days. When ready to smoke, soak hams and shoulders in cold water for 1½ to 2 hours, bacon for thirty minutes. Hang meat overnight in a cool place to drain and dry before smoking.

Use bag salt (sometimes called cooking or canning salt) to cure meat. Never use iodized

~SMOKER~

Hardwood or Metal Cover →

Pole to hang meat on →

Metal Cover ↓

Fire in old pan →

Barrel

Stovepipe for smoke

salt, or table salt in boxes. Mix curing material in enamel pans. Never use metal dishes for salt. Heavy glass or pyrex ware is okay. You may mix brown and white sugar together in any cure if you desire.

If you only butcher one or two hogs a year, a good do-it-yourself smokehouse can be made from a large wooden barrel. It is easiest to put the barrel on the side of a hill, but any spot on high land will do. (It should not be left any place where water will settle in wet weather.)

My grandfather used either corn cobs or apple wood chips for smoking, since he had no way to obtain hickory chips, which are preferable, if available.

The ideal temperature for smoke-house is between 80° - 90° F. Try not to let it get as hot as 100°.

Dig a pit for the fire. (You can use a metal garbage can cover to cover your firepit.) Then dig a short trench to hold a six inch stove pipe—one length with elbow to go into barrel is sufficient. Cut a hole in bottom of barrel and run stove pipe elbow up into barrel. Use an open-top barrel with a tight wooden cover. Bore holes in the side of the barrel near top to run old broom handles (or other poles) through to hang meat on.

On the first day of smoking, ventilate by raising the wooden cover half an inch to allow moisture to escape, then close the

cover to finish smoking. You can build a fire each morning for a week, then throw on a few corn cobs or wood chips, and let it burn until the fire goes out. Or you can keep a continuous smoke for two days or so until desired flavor is reached.

When ham and bacon is smoked, hang in a cool, well-ventilated place. It probably won't last long enough for any to spoil.

For the adventurous cook, Martha Howett of York, Pennsylvania—a frequent visitor to the area—reveals two tried-and-true recipes for stuffed pig stomach and jellied pig's feet.

HOG MAW (Stuffed Pig Stomach)

8 large potatoes
1 lb. fresh sausage meat
1 T. salt
1 pig stomach
1/4 c. water

Dice peeled potatoes into 1/4-inch cubes. Mix with sausage and salt. Stuff into cleaned pig's stomach and sew opening. Place in a roasting pan with the water, cover and bake at 300° for three hours. (Uncover to brown during the last 30 minutes).

SOUSE (Jellied Pig's Feet)

Boil two pig's feet with the tongue of the pig until meat falls off the bones. Discard bones, gristle and skin. Chop meat very fine and divide into custard cups. Bring broth to full boil, season with salt and pepper (some cooks add vinegar), and pour over meat. Stir and cool. Unmold to serve.

And for those less adventuresome types, Nita Moulton of Oxford offers a down-to-earth recipe for old-fashioned sausage.

PORK SAUSAGE

Pick up a box of Heller's Pork Sausage Seasoning at your nearest meat packer's (Oxford Provisions in Norway, for instance). Mix it, along with some sage, with equal quantities of ground beef and ground pork. Form one small patty, fry well in a skillet, and taste. If it is not flavorful enough, add more seasoning to the mixture. That's all there is to it! ■

NOVEMBERFIELD

Across November's fallen field
Gently does Elizabeth carry
With grass' spent seedhead
Which bewitched is Goldilocks
Goldilocks and her friends
Mama Papa Baby Bear
Ate porridge and tea
In a corn stalk house
Talk turned to important things
Why clouds hurry by
The sun must sleep
& broken chairs mended
Wind rustled the stalks
Goldilocks rose & danced
Cast loose a seed
& tumbled with her cousins
Seedheads become people lost
The child weeps in hay

Winslow Durgin
Minot



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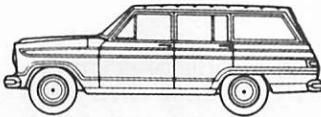
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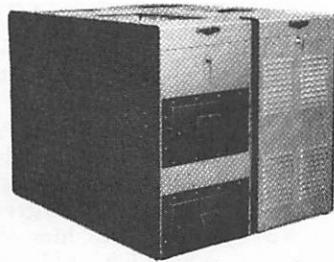
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SPECIALS

OPEN HOUSE: at the Progress Center for Retarded Adults, South Paris; Fri., Dec. 1, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.; Sat., Dec. 2, 10 a.m.-12 noon. Christmas Fair & Display; refreshments. For information call 743-8049.

SPECTRA I: A major inter-art exhibition of painting/graphics, literature, music, sculpture, photography, and dance/theatre; to be held at Westbrook College, May-June, 1979. Sponsored by the Maine Association for Women in the Fine and Performing Arts and Westbrook College; to promote & give exposure to year-round Maine resident artists. Contributions of art, writing, theatre, music and photography by women sought. Contact Sue Ostroff, Box 168, Hallowell, ME 04347.

THE FARE SHARE CO-OP STORE: a non-profit, consumer-run natural foods store is now open at 123 Main Street, South Paris (opposite McDonald's), on Thurs. 2-6; Fri. 2-8; and Sat. 10-5. Co-op members pay lower costs and work a few hours/month in the store. Everyone is welcome. Featuring whole-grain breads, cheese, nuts, dried fruits, flour, juices, herbs. Lending library and books for sale also available.

THE MAINE AUDUBON SOCIETY'S WOOD FUEL PROGRAM: offers assistance in management and marketing of woodlands. Call 743-6819 or write the Society Headquarters, Gilsland Farm, 118 Old Route One, Falmouth, ME.

HUCKLEBERRYING WITH THOREAU: A GLORIOUS CONTRAST

Thoreau, of course, is a New England classic. He was a writer of natural theories and dry wit and, as such, has a certain timelessness which makes him the subject of countless classroom discussions.

But can he be made interesting enough to serve as the base of an original drama? That was the question we asked ourselves as we walked into a Hebron Academy parlor to witness a one-act play entitled *"Huckleberrying With Thoreau,"* written by Nicholas Durso and performed by Lewis J. Alessio of the Theatre at Monmouth.

According to the program, the time was 1859 "or thereabout"; the place Concord, Mass. (or thereabout). But it was indeed a 19th century parlor where we sat, complete with threadbare Turkish carpet, draped window seat and stack of leather-bound books—the perfect setting for a fine, dull monologue of academic proportions.

Then came the bold entry of the play's sole character, clad in homespun and moccasins, and the entire feeling changed. We were no

longer an audience of senior citizens and tourists in blue jeans. Instead, we were Henry's students, and we rambled with him. For this was not a discourse of literary quotes, but the friendly reminiscence of a precious eccentric who never quite grew up. As his students, we sat with him on the shore of the lake; as little Edward Emerson, we picked huckleberries with our father's friend and learned a true faith bred in nature.

Nicholas Durso has written a marvel of spontaneous thought wherein those famous quotes we have all been taught are not isolated like samplers stitched in tough thread but rather flow as warm and human homilies, so that when a familiar phrase is uttered in the context of Thoreau's speech it almost gets by us unrecognized.

The play's pacing is spell-binding—one scene moves into another as the man is first up, then down; in the fields, then at the schoolhouse—and the interest moves with him. This is surely due in part to the

ART

RECENT WORKS OF MICHAEL PALMER: Paintings in Acrylics, Bates College Treat Gallery, Lewiston. Gallery hours: M.-F. 1-4:30 p.m. and 7-8 p.m.; Sun. 2-5 p.m. Admission Free.

WESTERN MAINE ART GROUP: Celebration Mime Theatre's Community Pottery Program Display & Workshop, Nov. 16-19.

SCULPTURE BY DUNCAN HEWITT and C. REGINA KELLEY: Exhibition by 2 University of Maine instructors, Hebron Academy's Hupper Gallery, beginning Oct. 15. Gallery hours: M.-F. 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sun. 2-5 p.m.

CHILDREN BY SEVEN MAINE ARTISTS: Payson Gallery, Westbrook College, Portland. Supplements a regular collection of Impressionist & Post-Impressionist art. Coming in Nov.: Art by Children in Portland public schools. Gallery hours: Tu.-F. 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sat. & Sun. 1-5 p.m.; Closed Holidays.

MUSIC

HENDRIK BROEKMAN and KATHERINE DEBOER: harpsichordists, Bates College Chapel, Sun., Nov. 12, 8 p.m. Free Admission.

THE RAGTIME YEARS, MAX MORATH: Piano, Nov. 6, 8:15 p.m., Lewiston Junior High School Auditorium, part of the Community Concert Series for ticket holders only.

THE PORTLAND STRING QUARTET: Dec. 6, Gould Academy's Bingham Hall, 7:30 p.m. Free Admission.

(A Review by Nancy Marcotte)

sensitive directing of Lisa Durso, and to Ed Lundergan's music. A recorder, a flute, and a guitar are the only instruments and their melodies become part of the scenes at all the right evocative moments.

The lion's share of the credit, however, must go to Alessio, for his performance of Thoreau is both exciting and convincing. He moves in the part as if he were the man—a complex and contradictory soul. Sensitive hands, a strongly muscular neck, laugh-wrinkles at the corners of the eyes, a contemplative crease in min-forehead, wire-rimmed glasses and "ridiculous straw hat"—all are part image and part imagination.

But beyond his convincing delivery, Alessio brings to the part a great mastery of space and surroundings. He is always in mime-like control—unforeseen circumstances notwithstanding. When a flower goes flying onto the floor during one speech, he retrieves it, handing it graciously to a woman in the front row as he "lectures" her on God's bounty. Striding to an imaginary

LECTURES

GWENDOLYN BROOKS: Pulitzer Prize-winning poet, Thurs., Nov. 2, Bates College Chase Lounge, 8 p.m. Free Admission.

PAUL ROSS: talking on Big Wall Climbing, Dec. 13, at Gould Academy's Bingham Hall, 7:30 p.m. as part of the Academy's Outing Club Lecture Series. Free Admission.

THEATRE

"TEN NIGHTS IN A BAR ROOM": staged by the Lewiston-Auburn Community Little Theatre Nov. 2-4, 10-11, Universalist Church, Pleasant St., Auburn. For ticket information, write Box 323, Auburn, ME 04210.

"BEYOND THE HORIZON": by Eugene O'Neill, Nov. 30-Dec. 3, Bates College Schaeffer Theatre.

— — — — —

THE CELEBRATION MIME COMPANY will perform a comedy-fantasy entitled *Christopher Columbus!* by Michel de Ghelderode, the troupe's first attempt at a scripted play, on Sun., Nov. 7 at 7 p.m., at Hebron Academy.

Tony Montanaro directs. The public is welcome to attend. (Call 743-8452 for additional information.)

constable to be given a summons, he snatches a surprised girl's program and, folding it decisively, puts it in his shoe as a patch, all the time talking about papers, shoe leather, and government taxes.

Between Durso and Alessio, the character arrives as a real man, the kind of idealistic "crackpot" who can be found in every New England village, but a true visionary as well—someone who cries with the pain of the death of his brother, and rails from a soapbox against slavery or man's rapacious acts upon nature with an evangelical fervor to change the world. Yet around and between the intense moments are woven bits of dry Yankee humor. (Concerning the failure of his first book to sell, Henry observes, "I now own a 900 volume library, 700 of which I wrote myself.") And the resulting contrast is truly the glory of this play. ■

Huckleberrying With Thoreau will be staged at various spots around the state during the next year.

Ayah

We consider your comments and suggestions an important means of discovering our readers' interests. Representative and appropriate letters will be published as space allows. Most likely answers won't be necessary, and probably the only response you'll receive will be a most appropriate "Ayah!"

ON HIS WAY TO SOUTH ARM

In looking through a copy of the September *BitterSweet*, I recognized the "Can You Place It" picture as the ferry that crossed the Androscoggin River at Rumford Point before the bridge was built. I used to cross it on my way to South Arm on fishing trips.

*Merritt Roakes
South Paris*

BARTLETT'S SISTER

On page 37, October issue of your magazine, the note re "The Rumford Ferry" is the one and same East Bethel Ferry crossing.

In fact, I believe I was with my brother, Stanley Foss Bartlett, when he took the picture.

*V. Gwen (Bartlett) Swan
Portland*



ARTEMUS WARD'S COUSIN

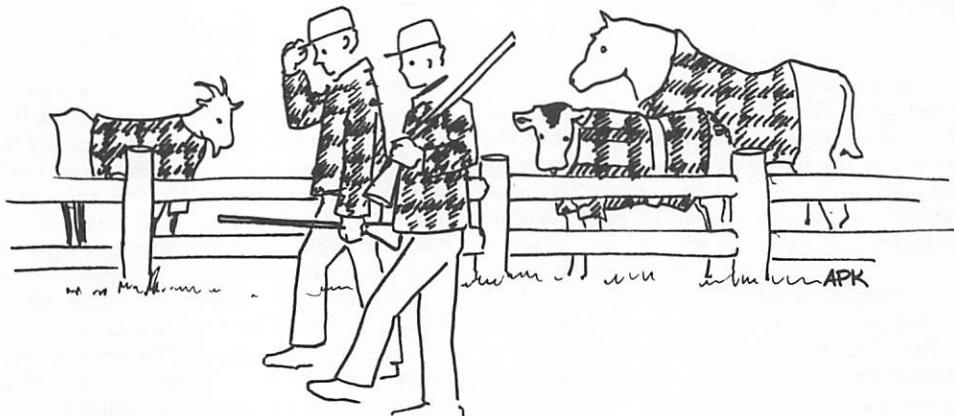
A dear friend called my attention to the fact that Daniel Brown was a cousin to Artemus Ward (not his father as I had stated in my September article, "My Year Of The Bear;" Levi Brown was his father). I knew the difference, having typed the new Waterford History for the publishers. The facts are on page 9. I regret the error very much.

*Margaret M. Sawyer
Waterford*

FOR THE LAYMAN

I am reading Dr. Lacombe's articles in *BitterSweet*. Look forward to the next two articles. Shall be with you. Very readable for the layman.

*Loton R. Pitts
Naples*





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The Summer Kitchen*

by Sally Clay

*As the center of activity in the early American farmhouse during all but the coldest winter months, the summer kitchen functioned as much more than a place to fix food during warm weather. Food was not only prepared there, it was manufactured, along with many other useful household items, turned out practically year-round. There was canning,

preserving, cheese making and cider pressing. Gardens were planned there. Chickens were plucked and freshly-bagged game was hung to air. Soap was made and fabrics were dyed. Thus, the summer kitchen has come to represent the broadest spectrum of the farming life.



Soon the ground will don its winter coat of snow, so now is the time to button up against the winter.

As the last of the autumn leaves crackle in the wind, be sure to rescue any garden tools left outside. Also, while the ground is still bare, you can forage through the woods for wild berries, pine cones, moss, and other ingredients for terrariums and Christmas decorations.

All gasoline should be drained from garden machinery such as lawn mowers, rototillers, and tractors. Leftover gas could turn to shellac over the winter, a sticky mess to gum up the carburetor in the spring!

Since Thanksgiving traditionally introduces the holiday season, it's not too early to be on the look-out for special holiday gifts. Blooming house plants make colorful centerpieces on holiday tables and are thoughtful hostess gifts if you are planning on enjoying Turkey Day at a friend or relative's house. Cyclamen, a bulb plant, enjoys cool temperatures (45-50 degrees) and blooms continuously from November to

March. Kalanchoe also blooms during this period with bright red flowers. Christmas cactus and even poinsettia plants make colorful gifts.

If you yourself are the Thanksgiving host or hostess, you might want to try a home-made variation on the traditional menu. Often after a heavy Thanksgiving dinner, guests end up needing a small break between the meal and the dessert. A delightful alternative to the traditional pies are *Fruit Squares*—made with piecrust and mincemeat, or even just apple butter. Put half of the crust dough in a rectangular baking dish, spread the mincemeat or apple butter over the first layer, then cover with another layer of crust and bake. When done, cut into squares and serve. A fingerfood, the squares make an ideal dessert to serve after everyone has left the table to enjoy conversation in the living room or football games on TV.

One last tip for the days of holiday cooking ahead—try to conserve heat (and elbow grease) by combining your cooking

projects. For those of you with wood cooking stoves, try to prepare stews and stove-top recipes while your bread or pies are cooking in the oven. Even in gas or electric stoves, several pies can be baked in one operation, casseroles along with pies, and so forth. Even if you cannot cook everything at the same time in the oven, cooking different items in sequence will save on energy lost through preheating and cooling down the oven on several different occasions. ■

Information for The Summer Kitchen column is contributed by Groan & McGurn Greenhouses, Bethel.



DEEP WOUND

I wonder what each hunter hunts
Whose heart is bow and arrow;
If it be love...that whitened bone
Long since wind-whistles marrow.

Hold then the white bone to the ear,
Or blow it trumpetwise.
Old seas still wash against far shores;
Notes fade beyond blue skies.

Each hunter quivers with the bow
That sends his arrow speeding;
He often wounds more than he kills;
He cries because he's bleeding.

Loton Rogers Pitts
Naples

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FOR SALE: *Sunday River Sketches: A New England Chronicle* by M. F. Wilkins. A 320-page regional history of Newry, Bethel, and 'Ketchum' (Riley Plantation). Genealogical matter on 400 area families and many illustrations. For descriptive brochure, write 509 Crescent Ave., Rumford, ME 04276.

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FOR SALE: *Whispering Winds* by Georgia Shaw Prescott, a collection of free-form verse, recalling the author's rural childhood in Hollis, Maine and celebrating the country's natural grandeur. Write Georgia S. Robertson, Buckfield, ME 04220.

WANTED: People who like old things and local history to join in the *Norway Historical Society*. Meetings held the third Wednesday of each month at Norway Library, 7:30 p.m. For information, call 527-2386.

BRAINTEASER VIII

While walking home one evening, Bill noticed that it took six seconds for the town clock to strike 6 o'clock. At lunch the next day, he heard the town clock strike 12, but it took more than twelve seconds. At first he thought the clock had slowed down. Then he realized the clock was still on time. How many seconds did it take for the clock to strike 12?

The person with the earliest postmarked correct answer will win a year's subscription to BitterSweet.

Brainteaser VII Answer

The first two people to unravel the answer to Brainteaser VII were R. Grover, Jr., Fryeburg and David England of Bethel. Both men learned that—since there is no way of knowing whether the person being asked the question is the twin that always lies or the one that always tells the truth—the question the traveler would have to ask in order to determine the correct road to Amsterdam would be, "which road would your brother say is the road to Amsterdam?" The traveler then takes the opposite road from the one indicated.

Others who had correctly answered Brainteaser VII at presstime were Bill McCoy, Casco; Jane & Robert Reibel, Croton-on-Hudson, New York; Mrs. Gordon Emery, West Paris; Brian Twitchell, South Paris; and Barry Millett, Quincy, Massachusetts.

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It was near Hiram Falls outside of Baldwin that the Hiram crew took its stand, working all day Monday to tame the fire. By that night the fire seemed well contained, although after their experience with the Fryeburg ground fire, the men were cautious. But on Tuesday morning when they awoke to the gentle sound of steady rain, they knew that the ordeal was done.

The fire was out, leaving 20,000 acres of local forest land charred and smoking, and hundreds of people homeless. L. L. Kimball, an oldtimer who had survived the flood of 1898, remarked, "By God, now we've been through both hell and high water!" But remarkably, for all the devastation caused by the fire, no lives were lost in Oxford County, and casualties were light.

Maybe it could happen again, maybe it couldn't—opinions differ. Fire departments today are better equipped, firefighters better trained, and communications more sophisticated. But who can catch the wind?

Almost immediately after the 1947 fire ended, most Brownfield residents returned to the ruins of their town and began work rebuilding. Near the burned-out railroad station an emergency town hall was set up in an old-fashioned combination baggage car-and-smoker, and the community again came to life.

Said Brownfield postal messenger Jennie Wentworth at the time: "You got to keep going. If you stop and think, you go crazy, and what's the good of going crazy?"

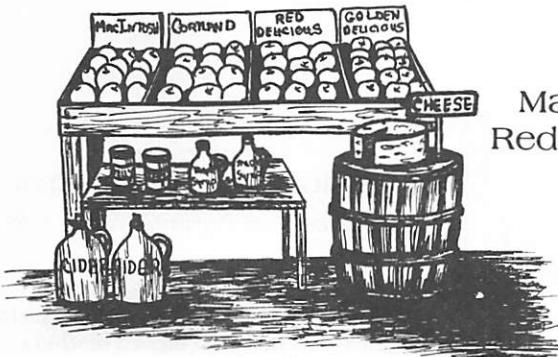
When winter weather made further building impossible, people set up housekeeping in prefabricated buildings sent by the Federal Government. Many of these people had lost not just their houses, but all of their belongings and their jobs as well.

But Mainers are not so easily defeated. "After all," said one resident, "only the houses are gone. Brownfield's still here." ■

Clay is a freelance journalist who recently moved to Hiram.



After fire destroyed Brownfield, the town fathers set up a town hall in this baggage-and-smoking car owned by Maine Central Railroad



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**THE GREAT
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(as told to Hiram Postmaster Walter Twitchell)

Folks in Hiram still chuckle over the tale of Jim Sargeant and the chicken feathers. It is a mystery still unsolved.

Some years ago a local resident operated a good-sized chicken farm, and over the years accumulated an impressive pile of chicken feathers on his property.

One autumn in the dead of night, a prankster drove up to the chicken farm, loaded the feathers onto his dump truck, and deposited the fluffy mess on a neighbor's front lawn down the road. Nobody knows why.



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At this time, Jim Sargeant had been newly appointed town constable, so he was responsible for tracking down the culprit. But Jim was long on profanity and short on sleuthing.

"Can't find a damn clue," he replied to anxious questions.

Several days passed and still the feathers remained. "Don't know who the hell did it," said Jim.

After a few weeks, a neighbor asked the constable when he was going to solve the case. "Don't know," said Jim. "Can't find out a goddamn thing. Pretty soon I'm going to have to call in the IGA."

Puzzled, the neighbor asked, "Don't you mean the FBI, Jim?"

"Same damned thing," drawled Jim.

But the IGA never investigated, and the Hiram feather filcher remains at large. ■

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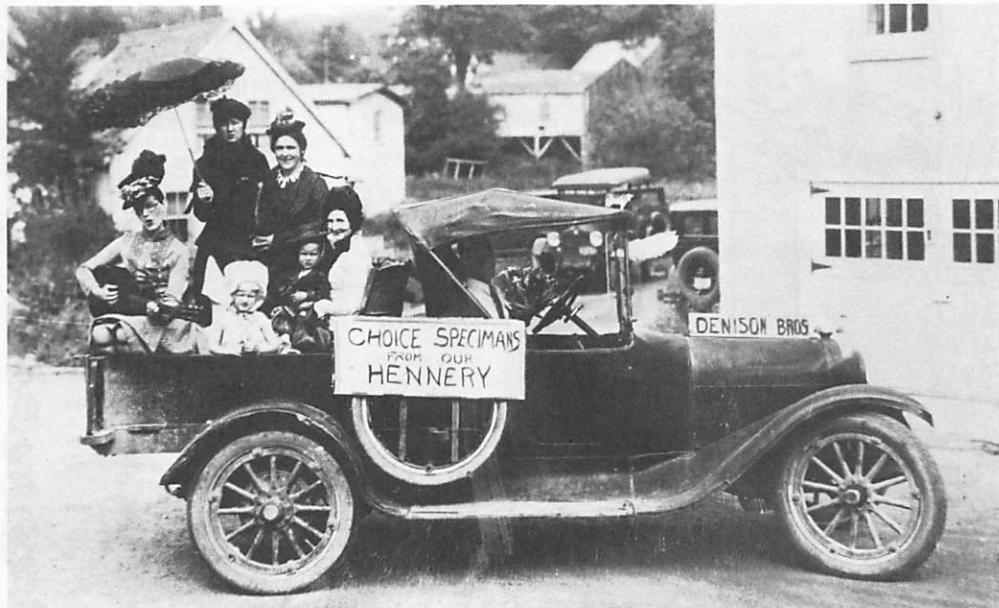
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Can You Place It? (From Our "No Comment" Department!)



Last month's "Can You Place It?" showed Frank Daniels hauling a load of coal from the Grand Trunk Railroad to the mill across the old Oxford Covered Bridge on King Street... and the Oxford Stage, driven by Frank Grover.



Real Estate

OXFORD - Large Family? Take a look at this unusual ranch—it could be just the home for you. In the large living room there is a nice brick heatilator fireplace w/glass doors. There is a separate large dining area adjoining the well-equipped kitchen. There can be 5 bedrooms or space for an office, study or sewing room. There is a large family room, sun deck, patio, 2 baths, central vacuum system, vinyl siding, full insulation, attached garage and much, much more—even 2+ acres of land.

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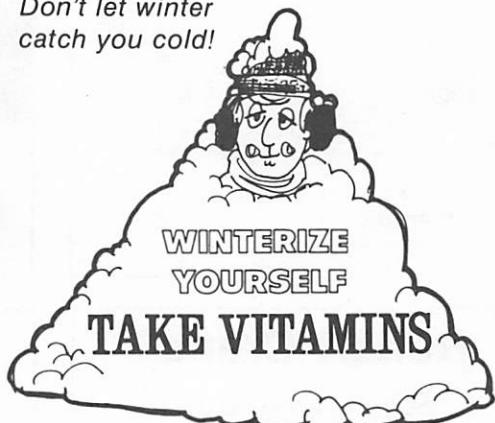
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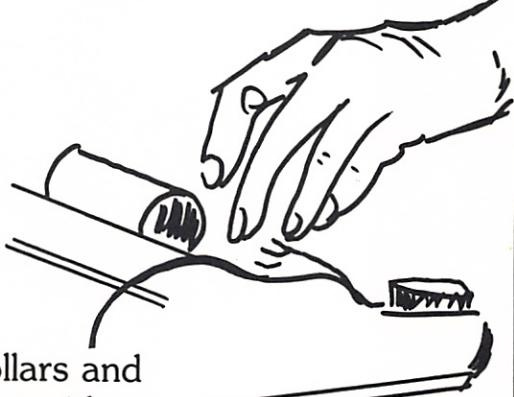
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